



Young children's bodies: multiple perspectives on the embodied experience of starting school.

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Abstract

Transition into formal schooling is a significant life event with a long-term impact on achievement and wellbeing. This study explores the lived experience of six children starting school in England, as well as their parents and educators, to examine the question *How do children experience the transition into school in the context of their families and educators?* Taking place in England at a time when the need for children to be school ready is emphasised in government policy, the study aims to consider whether educational practice anticipates and responds to children's lived experiences of starting school.

The mature bioecological systems model of development frames the study (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006), enriched to account for power relations in school (Bernstein, 2000), the impact on children's bodies (Foucault, 1977) and the agential nature of the material world (Lupton, 2019). The case study approach focused on the transition into one Reception class. Children's perspectives were foregrounded and explored through participatory approaches (Clark and Moss, 2001): participant observations, draw and talk, and photo tours. Interviews were carried out with key adults involved in this transition: their key early years educator, receiving teaching staff, and parents. Data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019).

Findings emphasised the embodied, physical nature of participants' transition experience: the sensory entanglements children experienced as they encountered the material world of school; how assemblages between children and objects shaped their experiences; the physical demands placed on children's bodies; adults' focus on 'readying' them for school; and the bodily reactions of children, particularly hunger and fatigue. Implications for policy and practice include recognising the importance of the material world as children start school, being aware of the physical demands of a 'schooled' body, reducing the emphasis on formal practices in Reception and meeting the needs of the body.

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Contents

Chapter 1	Introduction.....	11
Chapter 2	Literature Review.....	15
2.1	Theoretical framework	16
2.1.1	Ecological transition.....	16
2.1.2	Context	16
2.1.3	Proximal processes.....	19
2.1.4	Person	20
2.1.5	Time: Microtime, Mesotime and Macrotime.....	20
2.2	Proximal processes: relationships with humans and the role of power	21
2.2.1	Bernstein: the role of classification and framing	21
2.2.2	Foucault and the docile body	23
2.3	Proximal processes; relationships with the material world.....	25
2.3.1	New materialism and a ‘more-than-human’ approach	25
2.4	Visualising the integrated theoretical framework	28
2.5	Transition literature	31
2.5.1	The importance of age and a developmentally appropriate pedagogy	31
2.5.2	School readiness	32
2.5.3	Perspectives of participants in the transition process.....	33
2.5.4	The absence of the body	36
2.5.5	Physical development.....	38
2.6	Summary of transition literature	40
2.7	Research questions	41
Chapter 3	Methodology and Methods.....	42
3.1	Methodology	42
3.1.1	Research paradigm.....	42
3.1.2	Children as rights holders	43
3.1.3	Listening to children: multiple and participatory methods	44

3.1.4	Case study approach	45
3.2	Ethical considerations	58
3.2.1	Ethical research with young children	59
3.2.2	Safeguarding	62
3.2.3	Data Storage.....	62
3.3	Initial study.....	62
3.4	Timeline of data collection.....	63
3.5	Methods.....	66
3.5.1	Interviews	66
3.5.2	Observations.....	68
3.5.3	Draw and talk.....	72
3.5.4	Photo tours	75
3.6	Trustworthiness	79
3.6.1	Credibility	79
3.6.2	Dependability and confirmability	79
3.6.3	Transferability	80
3.7	Data Analysis.....	81
3.7.1	Transcription and familiarisation	82
3.7.2	Coding	82
3.7.3	Themes.....	84
3.8	Chapter summary	87
Chapter 4	Findings: Bodies in Transition	88
4.1	Multi-sensory bodies	93
4.1.1	Sound: children, bells and hand-dryers	93
4.1.2	Touch: Entanglements with the material world	95
4.1.3	Smell: flowers, handwash and bread	102
4.1.4	Embodied experiences of food.....	103
4.2	Bodies encountering objects	108
4.2.1	Objects carry meaning: 'I just need to take a photo of these chairs'	109

4.2.2	Objects to decipher: ‘What are these things?’	111
4.2.3	Objects that disempower: ‘I can’t do this tap’.	117
4.3	Bodies becoming ‘schooled’	120
4.3.1	Striated spaces: carpet time.....	120
4.3.2	Striated spaces: lunchtime in the hall.....	124
4.3.3	Striated spaces: service in the hall.....	127
4.3.4	A smooth space: the playground.....	129
4.3.5	Adults describing the embodied transition.....	132
4.3.6	Parents preparing children’s bodies for school.....	133
4.3.7	Parents’ bodies becoming ‘schooled’	138
4.3.8	Educators preparing children’s bodies for school	141
4.4	Bodies reacting	151
4.4.1	Anxious/unsure	151
4.4.2	Laughter	152
4.4.3	Tiredness.....	154
4.4.4	Hunger.....	157
4.5	Chapter summary	160
Chapter 5	Integration and Discussion.....	161
5.1	Multi-sensory bodies and bodies encountering objects	161
5.2	‘Schooled’ bodies and bodies reacting.....	165
5.3	Chapter summary	170
Chapter 6	Implications and Conclusion	172
6.1	Strengths and limitations.....	173
6.2	Contribution of the thesis	174
6.2.1	Theoretical integration on transition to school	174
6.2.2	A gap in knowledge is addressed.....	176
6.2.3	Recommendations: Practice	176
6.2.4	Recommendations: Policy.....	178
6.3	Conclusion	181

Chapter 7	References	182
Chapter 8	Appendices	205
	Appendix 1 – Information sheet and consent form	206
	Appendix 2 – Child Information Sheet.....	209
	Appendix 3 – Excerpt of Interview Transcript.....	210
	Appendix 4 – Interview Schedule.....	212
	Appendix 5 – Logs of Data Collection	214
	Appendix 6 – Excerpt of Observation Transcript.....	221
	Appendix 7 – Excerpt of Draw and Talk Transcript	223
	Appendix 8 – Excerpt of Photo Tour Transcript	227
	Appendix 9 – Transcription notation system for orthographic transcription	233
	Appendix 10 – Example of NVivo complete coding.....	234
	Appendix 11 – Excerpts of InVivo and Process Coding	235
	Appendix 12 – Working Towards Candidate Themes	236
	Appendix 13 – Parents’ data.....	238
	Appendix 14 – Educators’ data	241
	Appendix 15 – Children’s data	243
	Appendix 16 – Frequency of coding for theme Multisensory bodies	249
	Appendix 17 – Types of photographs from photo tours.....	250
	Appendix 18 – Importance of buddies in service.....	251

List of Tables

Table 1 - Overview of child participants.....	51
Table 2 - Methods used to address research questions.....	66
Table 3 - Summary of Observations in early years settings and school.....	70
Table 4 - Summary of Photo Tours	77
Table 5 - Theme: Bodies in transition with data from children, parents and educators.....	90
Table 6 Prompts for practitioners	177

List of Figures

Figure 1 - Macrosystem, Exosystem, Mesosystem and Microsystem visualised as concentric circles	17
Figure 2 - Tudge's visualisation of the PPCT bioecological model	17
Figure 3 - Integrating Bernstein, Foucault and new materialism with the mature bioecological model	30
Figure 4 - Jim's "notes" in my notebook	47
Figure 5 - Diagram of participants and their relationships	49
Figure 6 - the 'outside classroom'	54
Figure 7 - The hall	55
Figure 8 - The large playground	56
Figure 9 - Timeline of school induction process	57
Figure 10 - Stages of gaining consent	59
Figure 11 - 'Finding out' clothes (captured unintentionally by Sean during photo tour).	61
Figure 12 - Timeline of data collection before children start school	64
Figure 13 - Timeline of data collection after children start school	65
Figure 14 - Albert's photo of the carpeted alcove used for Draw and Talk	75
Figure 15 - Visualisation of the proportion of comments made by adults and children on each theme	89
Figure 16 - Cassandra's picture of her coat	98
Figure 17 - Sean's photos of the hall floor	99
Figure 18 - Cassandra's photos of the flowers	102
Figure 19 - Olivia's drawing of a plate	103
Figure 20 - Olivia's photo of the chairs in the hall	109
Figure 21 - Xavier's photo of hall chairs	110
Figure 22 - Jim's photos of the chairs in the hall	110
Figure 23 - Xavier's photo of the playground	112
Figure 24 - Xavier's photo of a fox	112
Figure 25 - Xavier's photo of a 'painting'	113
Figure 26 - Jim's photo of the Harvest bread	114
Figure 27 - Sean's two photos of the candles for service	115
Figure 28 - Xavier's photo of the candles for service	115
Figure 29 - Albert's photo of the candles for service	116
Figure 30 - The step in front of the lunch counter	118
Figure 31 - 'Carpet time' rules	120
Figure 32 - Demarcating space on the carpet with masking tape lines	121
Figure 33 - Rows of tables and chairs at lunchtime in the hall	124
Figure 34 - Cassandra's photos of the climbing wall	130
Figure 35 - Visualising an assemblage of person-object-people	164
Figure 36 - Findings incorporated within the integrated theoretical model.	175

Acronyms

EYFS: Early Years Foundation Stage

EYFSP: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

GLD: Good Level of Development

MAT: Multi Academy Trust

OFSTED: Office for Standards in Education

RQ: Research question

UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Glossary

EYFS: The Early Years Foundation Stage contains the statutory requirements for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five-years-old in England. There are 17 early learning goals in total.

EYFSP: the summative assessment document that Reception teachers fill in at the end of the Reception year. It describes a child's attainment against the 17 early learning goals (ELGs) and three Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Service: a time when the whole school gathers in the hall for Christian worship, led by the head teacher.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Starting school is a significant transitional time in a child's life (Dockett and Perry, 2004; Niesel and Griebel, 2005; Dunlop and Fabian, 2007) that impacts on children's ability to cope with future transitions, on later achievement (Ladd et al., 2000; Margetts, 2002; Dunlop, 2003) and on wellbeing (Hirst et al., 2011). England has one of the youngest school starting ages worldwide (Sharp, 2002). In England, 95% of three and four-year-olds attend pre-school education, generally part-time (DfE, 2017a). Although the statutory starting age is the term after children are five-years-old (DfE, 2020a), most start school when they are four (Tickell, 2011); those with birthdays in the summer months can be starting the transition process when they are still three-years-old. The first class for children starting school in England is called Reception.

The current policy context in England emphasises a 'school readiness' agenda with a deficit model, where children's abilities in specific areas are assessed on entry and interventions planned to fill the gaps (McDowall Clark, 2017). This can mean children are viewed as lacking as they begin their school lives. Government documentation such as the 'Are you ready?' Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) publication (2014) emphasises the need for children to be made ready for school. Yet there is no clear definition of what it is to be school ready, only that '*unreadiness*', a term introduced in the Tickell review (2011), will disadvantage them.

Reception constitutes the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum (DfE, 2017b) and teachers are required to complete an Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) for each child at the end of Reception. Introduced in 2012, this profile assesses children in each of 17 Early Learning Goals. A child is judged to have achieved a 'Good level of Development' (GLD) if they are assessed as achieving at least the 'Expected' level in personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language as well as in mathematics and literacy. Results of the EYFSP are published on the school website and are reported on nationally by the government, for example, in 2018-2019, 71.8% achieved GLD (DfE, 2019). Schools may set the percentage of children expected to achieve GLD as a professional performance target.

A recent evidence review indicates there is an emphasis on cognitive skills as children enter school which promotes direct and formal teaching (Pascal et al., 2019). A key element of this is the direct instruction of systematic synthetic phonics in Reception. Individual results of the Phonics Screening Check (PSC) at the end of Year 1 are reported to parents as Pass/ Fail; children who 'fail' are required to re-sit the test in Year 2. School level results are also

published online, submitted for Ofsted to access during inspection, and published nationally to monitor standards. Schools can receive spot inspections to ensure the check is being carried out in accordance with instructions. Understandably, these high stakes shape pedagogy within Reception classes.

I have experienced children transitioning to school from three different perspectives: as an early years teacher, a Reception class teacher, and as a parent. All three have influenced my positioning in relation to children starting school.

For 14 years I was an early years teacher in a day nursery. I observed children's excitement and trepidation about the move to 'big' school as well as the range of parents' feelings. A number of parents would share how challenging children were finding the transition: some were extremely distressed, others were exhausted. Parents of these children often said they felt helpless seeing their child struggle in this way. I worked in a cluster group with other local early years educators and teachers trying to improve children's experience of starting school. The project highlighted the challenge of transitioning from an early years' focus on play, building on children's interests, to the school's emphasis on literacy and numeracy targets; our attempts to implement transition activities could not address this gulf.

As a Reception teacher, I have observed a dramatic difference in pace, timing and prescribed teaching since 2015, compared to starting my Reception teaching career in the 1990s. Teaching systematic synthetic phonics, assessing and collating data, and top-down targets for literacy and mathematics all now influence the transition process (Bradbury and Roberts-Holmes, 2018). Data have to be collected before 'teaching' can begin and children are placed into intervention groups much earlier to meet literacy and mathematics targets.

In both roles, I worked with children and parents who found this start to school stressful or even distressing. As a parent, I experienced the personal impact of children starting school who encountered various challenges: separation, wearing uniform, coping with the requirement to attend every day, managing toileting and conforming to the image of the school child.

I wished to explore these other aspects of adjusting to school, the 'hidden curriculum' (Jackson, 1968; Giroux, 1981; 2001) involved in the process of becoming a school child. The hidden curriculum refers to additional elements which constitute the culture of the classroom, hidden or invisible expectations about how children 'should' behave in school and by which the success of a teacher is judged. Lining up, sitting still in particular positions, being quiet on a signal are some of the elements required to embody the identity of a school child. Bernstein's theory of 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.102), the rules relating to the

functioning of the 'social space' (See Section 2.2.1) allows us to examine and explicate the hidden curriculum which children experience as part of starting school. In this study the focus is on the classroom experience in its widest sense; in the physical objects and spaces as well as the expectations of routines, timings, and behaviours imparted to the children as they start school.

The overall purpose of the research is to examine educational practice to consider whether it anticipates and responds to children's lived experiences of transition. Starting with this broad aim, the thesis developed a sharper focus on embodied experiences. This process is explained in Section 2.7 and Section 3.7.3.2.

Chapter 2 first develops the theoretical framework used in the thesis, merging the mature bioecological model of children's development (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) with insights from Bernstein, Foucault and new materialism. It then reviews existing literature on starting school including the perspectives of all involved; identifies a gap in transition literature and explains a shift in focus to an embodied view of children's start to school. The chapter concludes by stating the research questions which incorporate this change in focus.

Chapter 3 explores the study's research design and methodology; underlying assumptions about children's rights; and my dual role of teacher and researcher. The rationale and boundaries of a case study approach are explored, with ethical issues and lessons learned from the initial study. For each method, interviews, observations, draw and talk and photo tours, the rationale is explained, and the data collection process presented. The trustworthiness of the study is considered in terms of its credibility, dependability, and confirmability as well as transferability. Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019) is described including the process of narrowing the research focus to emphasise embodied experiences of children starting school.

Chapter 4 presents the findings in the four subthemes contributing to the overarching theme of *Bodies in transition*, using data from all participant groups and with some initial integration of the theoretical framework set out in Chapter 2. *Multi-sensory bodies* details sensory entanglements that children experienced as they first encountered the material world of the classroom and wider school environment. *Bodies encountering objects* illuminates how assemblages between children and non-human matter shaped their first few weeks at school. *Bodies becoming 'schooled'* explores physical demands made of children's bodies to demonstrate they had become a school child. The final subtheme explores children's *Bodies reacting* to the experience of starting school.

Chapter 5 integrates findings on the embodied individual and the material world, how adults act on children's bodies to school them, and how individual children experience this. It brings into sharper focus the way that government policies affect schools, children, pedagogies, and relationships.

Chapter 6 explicates the contribution of the study, including its integration of Bernstein, Foucault and new materialism into the bioecological model, and closing the gap in understanding children's embodied experience of starting school. I end with reflections on the impact on my own practice and make recommendations for changes to practice and policy that could improve children's well-being.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter establishes the study's theoretical framework: a bioecological systems approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; 1979; 1986; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) integrated with Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing (2000) to explain the power dynamics inherent in the system, Foucault's work (1977) to examine how power structures affect children's bodies, and new materialism to specify children's embodied experience of encountering the material world of the classroom (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Lenz-Taguchi, 2010).

It then reviews existing literature on the start to school, examining the importance of children's age and the extent to which the curriculum and pedagogy are developmentally appropriate; the policy context in England in which 'school readiness' frames expectations on microsystems and the relationships between adults in them. It reviews research on perspectives of parents, educators and children on the transition process. A gap in transition literature is identified around the physical, embodied, experience of children.

Search strategy

For the first phase of the literature search the databases 'Education Research Complete' and 'ERIC' were used via the OU Library. Search terms used included 'starting school', 'transition to school' and the 'perspectives' of 'children', 'parents', 'educators/teachers.' The journals *Early Childhood Education*; *Early Years*; *International Journal of Early Years Education* and *Early Years Educator* were targeted for recent publications relating to the start to school. Inclusion criteria involved the transition from an early years setting to formal schooling; I excluded the move into early years settings and the move from Reception into Key Stage 1. To boundary the reading, I focused on mainly qualitative research of children's perspectives exploring transition with a contextual approach. Identifying the importance of ecological theories in the transition literature meant that I searched for the works of Bronfenbrenner; and then theories of Bernstein and Foucault, following the realisation of the limitations of the bioecological model with regard to power relations and their impact on the body.

I went on to include the discipline of new materialism and materiality to examine the relationship children identified with objects and, literature relating to physical development and physicality to understand children's embodied experience. I began with searches on overview literature, focused on studies within educational settings and, where possible, early years settings.

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Ecological transition

Transition into school is a process rather than a single event (Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta, 2000; Dunlop and Fabian, 2007) which begins in the early years setting, and continues as the child physically attends the school setting. This study focuses on the transition process encompassing the period where a child is preparing to attend school, the 'settling in' period, and the time when they attend full time. Whilst recognising that transition continues beyond this time, I have chosen to focus on the most intense period where the participants are actively involved.

The start to school is an example of an 'ecological transition' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.26) defined as a change in a person's 'role, setting, or both' resulting from a change in their ecological environment. As a child starts school, their position in the ecological environment changes from pre-schooler to school child.

In the mature bioecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p.795) four elements are specified: Proximal Processes, Person, Context and Time (PPCT). These four elements interrelate and interact with each other in a dynamic way so that the researcher is looking at the Person, in the Context of four systems (exo, macro, meso and micro) and at Proximal Processes within the micro-system, over Time. Conceptualising the start to school in this way allows the complexity of interactions between the child and other people and environments, directly and indirectly involved in the transition, to be examined as they move into a new setting with its particular characteristics.

2.1.2 Context

The bioecological model conceptualises context as having 'Micro, meso, exo and macro' system levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) which are all interrelated and dynamically influence each other. Context influences proximal processes even when more distant. An additional system, the 'chronosystem' was added later (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) highlighting the significance of time on the developing individual (Section 2.1.5). Bronfenbrenner visualised these systems as concentric nested circles (Figure 1).

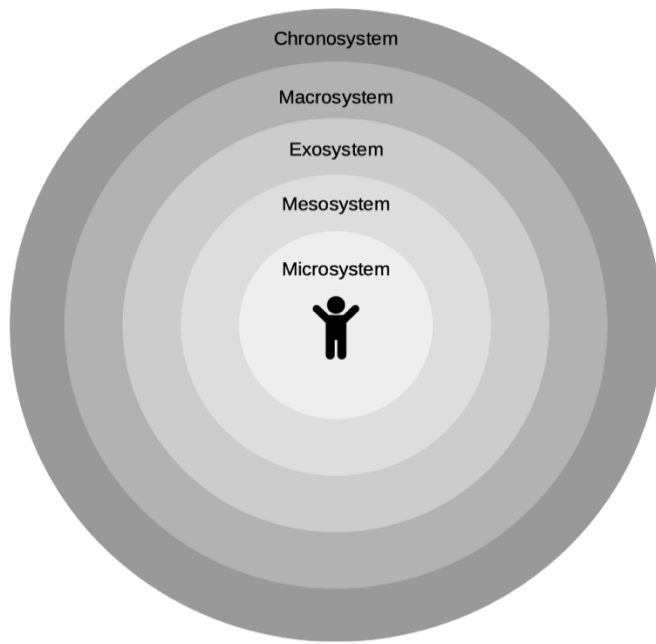


Figure 1 – Chronosystem, Macrosystem, Exosystem, Mesosystem and Microsystem visualised as concentric circles (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1986)

It has been noted that the child is positioned in this version as 'passive (and isolated)' (Darling, 2007, p.204) and that the contexts appear distinct from one another. The systems have since been conceptualised so that the developing person is represented as actively interacting with people, objects and symbols in the microsystem (Figure 2).

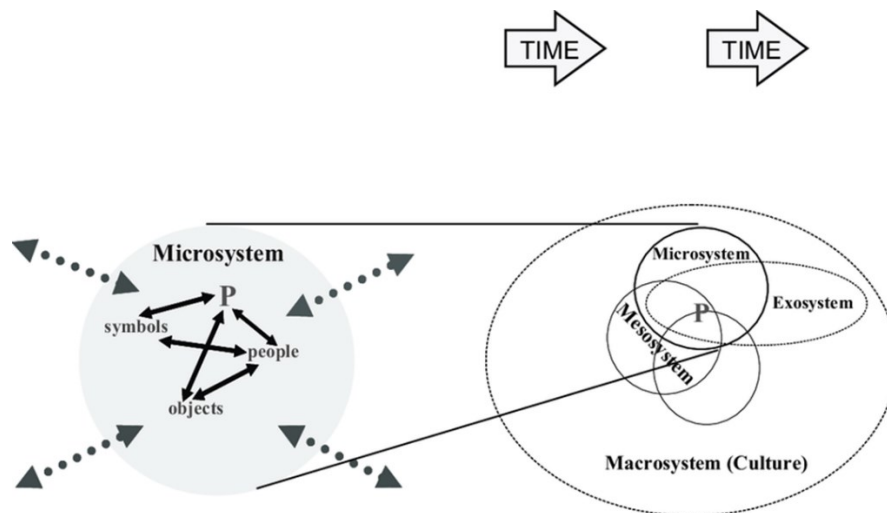


Figure 2 - Tudge's visualisation of the PPCT bioecological model (Tudge, 2008, p.69)

As well as allowing different microsystems to be shown as overlapping, Tudge's visualisation (2008) also enables the mesosystem to be represented as the relationships **between** microsystems, not a physical setting in its own right. Dotted lines around the exo and macro systems indicate the indirect influence they have on the child whilst time is shown as integral to the whole model with its positioning above all elements (Tudge, 2008). Magnifying the microsystem recognises the dynamic interrelations of all contexts but, for the present study, highlights the proximal processes within the classroom.

2.1.2.1 Microsystem

The microsystem is the individual's immediate environment, where direct, face to face activities and interactions occur. The individual influences, and is influenced by, these experiences. In the transition to school, children usually have three main microsystems: their home, the early years setting they are leaving, and the school they are entering. Each encompasses a particular 'pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.22). Microsystems are dynamically interrelated and influence each other.

2.1.2.2 Mesosystem

The mesosystem, 'a system of microsystems' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) is the interrelations between the various microsystems relevant to the individual. The mesosystem is complex and dynamically changing. In the transition to school the mesosystem assumes particular significance as it is a time when relationships between microsystems change and develop. Teachers enter the microsystem of the early years setting to discuss the children they will receive; parents enter school for meetings about their child's start. These relationships influence children's experiences as they start in Reception. Children too are part of the mesosystem, influencing and being influenced by interactions between settings.

2.1.2.3 Exosystem

A crucial aspect of context in the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) is the emphasis not only on proximal but also on 'distal' influences: environments in which the individual is not directly involved. The exosystem is one in which an individual does not directly participate. For example, a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) oversees a cluster of schools, creating educational policies for school and classroom practice, which affect the experiences of those in the microsystem. As another example, government policies in England legislate the curriculum content within educational settings (DfE, 2017b) and set the compulsory school starting age (DfE, 2020a) (see Section 2.5.1). A parent's workplace is

another example; one that does not allow flexible working hours would affect a family's ability to engage in a staggered pattern of attendance for a child's school entry.

2.1.2.4 Macrosystem

The macrosystem is an overarching set of beliefs and ideologies which influence all other systems. In terms of the transition to school, the macrosystem encompasses media, economics and culture; wider values about childhood; and political ideologies relating to education. Beliefs about when children need to be in formal educational settings, how and what they need to learn, influence policies in the exosystem and impact on experiences of children and their families from a distance.

2.1.2.5 Chronosystem

The chronosystem, representing 'Time', emphasises the influence of change, continuity and historical time on all the other systems. The subsections of the chronosystem are discussed in 2.1.5 as Time is represented separately in the bioecological model.

2.1.3 Proximal processes

Proximal processes, the heart of the bioecological model, are the consistent interactions between individuals and objects, symbols and other people in their environment. These bidirectional processes are 'the primary engines of development' (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p798). Person to person interactions are considered the most important and influential proximal processes; strong emotional relationships are viewed as critical to children's development. These change during the transition process; for example, children and parents often lose relationships with early years educators and build new relationships with staff in school.

Notably, interactions with objects and symbols are mentioned only briefly by the bioecological model which states that these interactions are 'not influenced by another participants' behaviors' (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p.814) and that person characteristics therefore have more impact. This thesis will argue that the lack of attention to interactions with objects overlooks a significant part of the transition experience for children (Section 2.3).

Proximal processes, whilst core to the model, are influenced by the characteristics of the individual, the proximal and distal contexts in which they occur and the time in which they are embedded.

2.1.4 Person

The individual brings unique person characteristics to their interactions and therefore shape and are shaped by their engagement with proximal processes.

Three types of person characteristics are defined in the bioecological model; 'demand', 'resource' and 'dispositions' or 'force' characteristics (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, pgs. 795-6). Demand characteristics are attributes such as age, gender, disability or skin colour which can stimulate a response in others, influencing proximal processes by the expectations they engender. For example, a child with visual impairment would impact on how the transition to school is planned and the interactions between adults and between children within the setting. Resource characteristics are the person's 'ability, experience, knowledge and skills' (p.796) – the social emotional and material resources that facilitate effective engagement in interactions. Children in Reception bring various prior experiences, knowledge and skills as they start school: some have had extensive experience of nursery, some have attended pre-school for a few hours a week and a few may not have attended an early years setting at all.

Disposition or force characteristics are considered the most influential in promoting or preventing proximal processes and may be developmentally 'generative' or 'disruptive' (p. 810). Examples Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) give of developmentally generative characteristics are: an ability to proactively seek engagement with their surroundings; responding positively to others' invitations to participate; and the ability to defer gratification; the opposites of these would be disruptive. In the start to school, 'disruptive' characteristics such as a refusal to cooperate with the routines of the classroom would impact on proximal processes and result in interventions to overcome these.

2.1.5 Time: Microtime, Mesotime and Macrotime

The 'chronosystem', representing time, is itself subdivided into 'micro, meso and macrochronological systems' (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p.820) all of which are dynamically interrelated to the other parts of the model.

Microtime involves interactions and activities within an individual's direct environment, such as a child's interaction with the adult supporting them to separate from their parent at the start of the day. Mesotime refers to consistent activities and interactions over a longer period of time (e.g., weeks) such as taking the register or routines for events such as lunch or 'service' (when the whole school gathers in the hall for Christian worship). Macrotime refers to historical time reflecting wider societal changes that influence an individual's development. The life course of an individual is also an element of macrotime, influenced by life course

research (Elder, 1998). When conceptualising and contextualising the transition process, the time at which the transition takes place for the individual child, and the historical time within which the transition is occurring, are key (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006; Elder, 1998).

I turn now to look in greater depth at the most relevant aspects of proximal processes in school transitions: relationships between humans within the classroom and between children and the material world of the microsystem.

2.2 Proximal processes: relationships with humans and the role of power

The bioecological model consistently emphasises bidirectionality: each component dynamically influences the other. Bronfenbrenner argues that there needs to be 'some degree of reciprocity' (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p.798) for proximal processes to be effective. Unidirectionality hinders effectiveness unless the developing person gradually shifts the power in their favour, for instance if a child is given more control over a situation (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

However, the model largely overlooks the power relations that may exist between systems and between individuals, relations which influence the reciprocity of proximal processes. In the transition to school, asymmetrical power relations are embedded in the mesosystem of school, early years settings and home; as well as within the microsystem of the classroom between teacher- parent and teacher-child. School decides on the transition programme, in terms of visits to settings, visits into school and information evenings for parents. Teachers control parents' access to the classroom and the timing and content of the induction process for children.

A more explicit conceptualisation of the power structures embedded in the microsystem of the school allows for increased insight into the transition of children entering this environment for the first time. To examine these more closely, I turn to the concepts of classification and framing developed by educational sociologist Basil Bernstein (2000). These enable an examination of links between exo and microsystems: as Bernstein argues, classification and framing 'create the linkage between macro structures and micro interactional communicative practices' (1990, p.101) which impact on children's experiences of school.

2.2.1 Bernstein: the role of classification and framing

'You're at big school now': This familiar phrase encapsulates how entering the specialised context of the school involves children, and their families, learning to recognise its nature and realising how to behave to meet its expectations. 'Recognition and realisation' rules

(Bernstein, 2000, p.17) refer to this process where the 'acquirer' must first recognise the particular features of this new context, to be able to distinguish 'between contexts' and then be able to meet the requirements 'within a context'. Children starting school must recognise the specialised nature of the classroom and wider school practices and learn to behave and speak according to these particular rules.

Classification seeks to explain how power relations are established and maintained in school and further assists in our understanding of children's experience of transitions into this context. Specific categories, such as between subject areas or between girls and boys have specialised meaning in school; these categories are 'insulated' (2000, p.6) from each other to preserve the boundaries of their specialised status. Insulation between 'category relations' (Bernstein, 2000, p.99) varies in strength, the stronger the insulation the more specialised the category. Classification is constructed by those within the system; schools seek to maintain their power over the pedagogic process and, in doing so, to legitimise their own identity and authority. Those in authority classify the transition experience for children, deciding how children make the transition into the classroom and the extent to which families can be involved.

Relevant to the transition experience, there can be boundary insulation between external elements, e.g., home and school; between internal elements, e.g., teachers and pupils; or between the bodily urges of the individual and the requirements of the class rules.

Boundaries can be more or less strongly insulated, e.g., parents may be allowed into the classroom (weak classification) or kept at the school gate (strong classification); toys from home may be allowed into the classroom or not allowed into the school at all; spaces may also be strongly or weakly classified with areas such as the carpet used in different ways at different times of the day. In addition, the use of uniform creates a strong classification between home and school in terms of what and how specific items of clothing must be worn.

Exploring the insulation between categories and how these are preserved or flexed provides insight into the varying strength of the boundaries, and therefore into the power relations within the microsystem of the classroom which children encounter as they start school. The flexing or preserving of boundaries resonates with Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of 'smooth' and 'striated' spaces which are discussed in Section 2.3.1.1 and which are seen as dynamic and constantly changing (1987, p.556).

Framing is defined as the 'controls on communications in local, interactional pedagogic relations' in other words 'who controls what' (Bernstein, 2000, p.12); how explicitly the rules and expectations of the categories in school are communicated and by whom. Deeper understanding of relationships between children and educators in the microsystem is

enabled by examining the framing of discourse and pedagogic interactions. Applied to the transition process, framing refers to the extent to which teachers control the timing, pace and sequence of the rules and expectations of becoming a school child in the first few weeks of school.

As with classification, framing can vary in strength. Strong framing means tight control by those in authority over the time, pace and sequence that knowledge is transmitted to those acquiring it. This control relates to two different systems of rules, 'instructional discourse' and 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.102). Instructional discourse refers to what is transmitted to the child, specific skills and the relationship they have with each other; in the classroom it refers to the subjects taught, the curriculum. Regulative discourse refers to rules of 'social order'; in the classroom it is similar to the 'hidden curriculum' (Giroux, 2001), i.e., the rules relating to the functioning of the social space such as lining up, sitting still and taking the register. Much of this regulative discourse relates to children behaving in a 'docile' and controlled manner. In the first few weeks of school, there is a particular emphasis on the regulative discourse as a group of children are inducted into the rules that allow the functioning of the classroom space and what it means to behave as a school child. The focus of this thesis is on regulative discourse, whilst recognising that it is inevitably linked to the system of instructional discourse (Bernstein, 2000).

The strength or weakness of classification and framing, the extent to which the boundaries are tightened or eased all directly affect how children experience the transition. Brooker (2002) applied Bernstein's concepts to examine the start to school in an English Reception class. Concepts of classification and framing were used to analyse classroom pedagogy and learning in children's homes, to gain a deeper understanding of the concordance of cultures between home and school. For example, even where families actively tried to prepare their children for school, they were often at odds with the practices in school.

In this study, I use concepts of classification and framing to examine the way school structured the experiences of children during their first few weeks. This included particular emphasis on the regulative discourse of the classroom and the strength of classification and framing between categories such as food, clothing, objects and of key spaces.

2.2.2 Foucault and the docile body

Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing illuminate constructs of the social space of school and how power relations are embedded and enacted within it. However, they do not provide a language with which to examine the impact on individuals. To do so I turn to the insights of philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault. Foucault views power as

relational: a 'chain' or 'net like organisation' performed between individuals, with the individual as the place where power is enacted and contested. Schools are social institutions, sites where disciplinary practices act on the body and become visible as individuals learn to embody the identity of a school child. Foucault speaks of a 'docile body' (1977) that 'may be subjected, used, transformed and improved' (Foucault, 1977, p.136). Disciplinary practices control the body in relation to movement, space and time. Close surveillance and correction are applied until the individual internalises and self-regulates these practices: 'discipline produces subjected and practised bodies, 'docile' bodies' (1977, p.138).

Disciplinary practices in schools have been explored with children moving from primary to secondary school (Simpson, 2000), primary aged children (Devine, 2003) and children as young as four-years-old (Dixon, 2011) (though in a context, South Africa, where children start compulsory formal schooling at six-years-old). Key disciplinary practices involve controlling children's bodies, for example through uniform (Simpson, 2000) or by controlling the timings and spaces of the school day (Devine, 2003). Dixon (2011) refers to the 'schooled' body, describing the classroom as a 'functional site' (Foucault, 1977, p.143) where teachers' practices act on children so that they become docile bodies able to sit still at tables, to embody the practices needed for reading and writing.

Individuals in school are 'partitioned' into particular spaces, not only at the macro level of class age groupings but also at micro levels in where their bodies are physically positioned throughout the school day. A key element of disciplining the body is surveillance. Movement and gesture are intensely observed and shaped until the individual performs in the required way. This 'microscope of conduct' (Foucault, 1977, p. 174) ensures that children respond to external instruction before eventually internalising the actions. Steeves and Jones (2010, p.187) argue that surveillance of children in general has increased and refer to the concept of 'surveillance as care' as children are nurtured and protected. However, Gallagher (2010, p.266) found that in practice, surveillance was 'discontinuous' in schools as children deviated from the rules and found ways to circumnavigate it. Children are active agents interacting within and between structural and interpersonal constraints that shape their experiences. This resonates with the reciprocity of proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) which incorporates the individual 'Person' characteristics of the child. Children's agency may not conform to adult expectations; it can be viewed as ambiguous and challenging (Bordonaro and Payne, 2012) in that it can disrupt established rules or ways of being. In this thesis, children's agency is conceptualised as relational where agency is located in the interactions that take place between the child and other people as well as the material world (see Section 2.3.1.2).

Starting school therefore means entering a disciplining space with rules and expectations of how the body should perform. Concepts of a 'docile' body and the disciplinary practices which work to achieve this are useful tools for examining how children's bodies are expected to change and adapt to embody the image of a 'schooled' body and how these practices impact on, and are influenced by, children's responses to them.

2.3 Proximal processes; relationships with the material world

As noted earlier, the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) mainly focuses its attention on interpersonal interactions. It only briefly mentions interactions with objects, viewing them as less influential than human relationships on children's development. Although 'progressively more complex reciprocal interaction with objects and symbols' (p.814) and 'objects and areas that invite manipulation and exploration' (p.815) are considered beneficial for development, Bronfenbrenner's emphasis is more on the environment's stability and on the role of objects as tools to encourage development. In contrast, everyday objects are not covered. This thesis argues that interactions with everyday objects are a crucial part of children's experiences as they start school that can facilitate transition or hinder and disempower children.

The mutuality of the material world including the specific objects found within the school microsystem is therefore largely overlooked by the bioecological model. To address this gap, I turn to the concepts and language of new materialism, which address non-human elements of human experience in addition to the body and the spaces which it encounters. The materialities of school and classroom influence children's experience of transition as they encounter these for the first time. Paying attention to the material world has the potential to offer a deeper understanding of children's embodied experience of starting school.

2.3.1 New materialism and a 'more-than-human' approach

New materialism refers to a broad range of perspectives across disciplines that share a post-humanist focus on the material world and the 'matter' within it (Latour, 2005; Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2013; Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Rautio, 2013). This 'matter' refers to human bodies, other living things, objects in the environment, time and physical spaces. New materialist ideas challenge the boundary between human and non-human matter, viewing objects in the classroom and wider school microsystem as 'agents' in their own right with as much agency as children starting school. However, my research is necessarily anthropocentric, centring as it does on children's experiences of starting school. Consequently, I take a 'more-than-human' approach (Lupton, 2019, p.3) which sees humans as 'one element' always dynamically relating to other, non-human elements and the material world in which they are

immersed. A 'more-than-human' approach seeks to pay attention to the non-human elements within 'assemblages' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.2) recognising that these entangled events are formed of human and non-human matter affecting and being affected by each other.

2.3.1.1 Objects and spaces

New materialism views the material world as agential and vibrant, not neutral or passive. Objects and spaces carry meanings and need to be examined as part of lived experience (Hultman and Lenz Taguchi, 2010, Kind, 2014). Within children's early educational experiences, assemblages of human and non-human elements can be examined to explore how the material world shapes children's experiences. Jones (2013) explored the impact of 'things' on school children's bodies through material discursive examination of encounters between the carpet, the teacher's chair, children's bodies, and the requirement for children to sit on the carpet around this chair. The chair is seen to physically position the teacher above the child emphasising the teacher's 'presence and power' and to possess 'authoritative, powerful qualities'. The relationship between the child and the chair is viewed both as a way of 'schooling and disciplining the body' (Jones, 2013, p.605) but also, through the child's intra-action, as a more complex relationship where this expectation could be disrupted. The spaces where entanglements occur are crucial to the encounter, influencing the experiences of those within it.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) developed concepts of 'smooth' and 'striated' spaces. A smooth space allows a greater degree of choice in how an individual may act. A striated space is highly prescribed – although not inevitably negative; it could be a place of comfort and predictability. During a transition into a new space, routine and explicit expectations in a striated space could help create a sense of familiarity and help young children to feel secure. However, a striated space can also be constraining if an individual is unable to challenge the prescribed actions, to consider new possibilities referred to as 'lines of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.14). These spaces are not viewed as fixed and separate entities; they 'exist only in mixture' and are in constant flux (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.552).

'Smooth' and 'striated' spaces resonate with Bernstein's concept of classification which can be weak or strong according to the strength of insulation between categories and which are also dynamic and ever changing. In the school microsystem, weakly classified, smooth spaces allow individuals a greater freedom to act than strongly classified, striated spaces where a more structured set of practices prescribe participants' actions. The focus is on the interaction between these two states and the encounters of individuals within these spaces

which they may seek to smooth or striate. This enables an examination of the impact of human and non-human matter on each other.

2.3.1.2 Bodies

New materialism views human experiences as embodied and multi-sensory, immersed in the material world (Braidotti, 2011; Lupton, 2019). It rejects mind/ body dualism, as embodied subjects intra-act with their surroundings in a process in which 'bodies, feelings and sensations [are] continually extending out into the world and drawing in elements of the world.' (Lupton, 2019, p.3). From this perspective children experience the world of school not only through their minds but also through their bodies; the mind and body are intertwined and not separate entities. Attention therefore needs to be paid to children's bodily experiences as they come to know the microsystem of the classroom for the first time; they need to be viewed as embodied subjects (Clark and Nordtomme, 2019).

The multisensory nature of bodies means that when considering children's experiences in educational settings it is important to pay attention not just to the visual or auditory but also to smell, taste and touch. Sensory touch refers not only to the way hands and fingers experience the environment, but also to the whole body's awareness of its presence in the world as part of the haptic system, defined by Gibson (1968) as the physical contact between the body and the environment as well as the ability of the body to sense its movement and where it is in space. The specifics of sensory experiences in an educational place are explored by Horton and Kraftl (2011); their research with pre-school children in a Sure Start Centre used multi-sensory evaluation to pay attention to children's everyday interactions with their surroundings. Findings revealed that children experienced the physical environment in an embodied and multi-sensory way with strong reactions to micro-geographies such as smells from the nappy changing area and textures on the scooter handles.

To gain a deeper and richer understanding of children's everyday experiences, there needs to be an underpinning understanding of the embodied nature of those multisensory, lived experiences (Rautio, 2013, Woodyer, 2008) as children encounter spaces, non-human forces and objects. 'Assemblages' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.2), made up of ever changing and dynamically interacting human and non-human forces, allow deeper and richer insight into children's everyday embodied and multisensory experiences. Research that explores assemblages of the embodied multi-sensory human and non-human forces in early years educational settings offers insight into the interplay between these different elements and how they affect and are affected by each other.

Mealtimes in early years settings have been the focus of such research using the concept of a 'foodscape' to indicate the inclusion of and interaction between 'spaces, bodies, foodstuffs, values and rules' in an ever-changing state of relationships (Brembeck and Johansson, 2010, p.797). Everyday objects associated with mealtimes, the 'materialities of the everyday' (Hansen et al., 2017, p.239) are also part of this assemblage; Hansen and colleagues explore interactions between human and non-human elements such as cutlery as part of their analysis of a Kindergarten mealtime and how these related to its smoothing and striating. The relationship between children's bodies and the space they inhabit is examined as part of research on a pre-school meal (Rossholt, 2012, p.324). 'Bodies *in-place*' conform to expected behaviours as they engage with the materialities of the space and objects associated with the meal; 'bodies *out-of-place*' do not.

Decentring agency from residing within the individual to a more distributed concept enables an examination of how humans and non-humans connect, relate and impact on children's experiences as they start school. Agency is viewed as relational and dynamic, emerging from the 'intra-action' (Barad, 2007, p.33) between human and non-human materialities rather than existing prior to the intra-action. Assemblages within the first few weeks of schools constitute proximal processes across the person-person and person-object divide and they allow for the examination of how spaces, objects and humans intra-act to affect children's transition experiences.

2.4 Visualising the integrated theoretical framework

The bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) provides a wide overview of factors that influence children's start of school, mapping out the different systems, relational, spatial and temporal, which influence the transition. Some aspects of childhood are not overtly articulated in the bioecological model; two with relevance to this thesis are questions of power relations within and between systems, and the role of the material world in children's proximal processes within the classroom and beyond.

Figure 3 below seeks to present how key theories addressing power and the material world have been integrated into the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) to explain and illuminate children's experiences of starting school. The core image is Tudge's (2008) visualisation of the bioecological model. A colour has been assigned to the three further theories this study integrates. The red indicates the contexts where Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing help to examine the power relations between exosystem and microsystem and, within the microsystem, how power relations between adults and the child are enacted. The green highlight on the P (Person) represents Foucault's concept of the 'docile body' and the disciplinary practices that are enacted

between adults and children. The blue outlines the Person-Object proximal processes to indicate where New Materialist theories enable the material world to be made visible.

The act of creating a diagram clear enough to convey meaning risks creating the illusion that these theories are, in practice, distinct from each other in the moment. However, in practice, they must be seen to be fluid and interrelated.

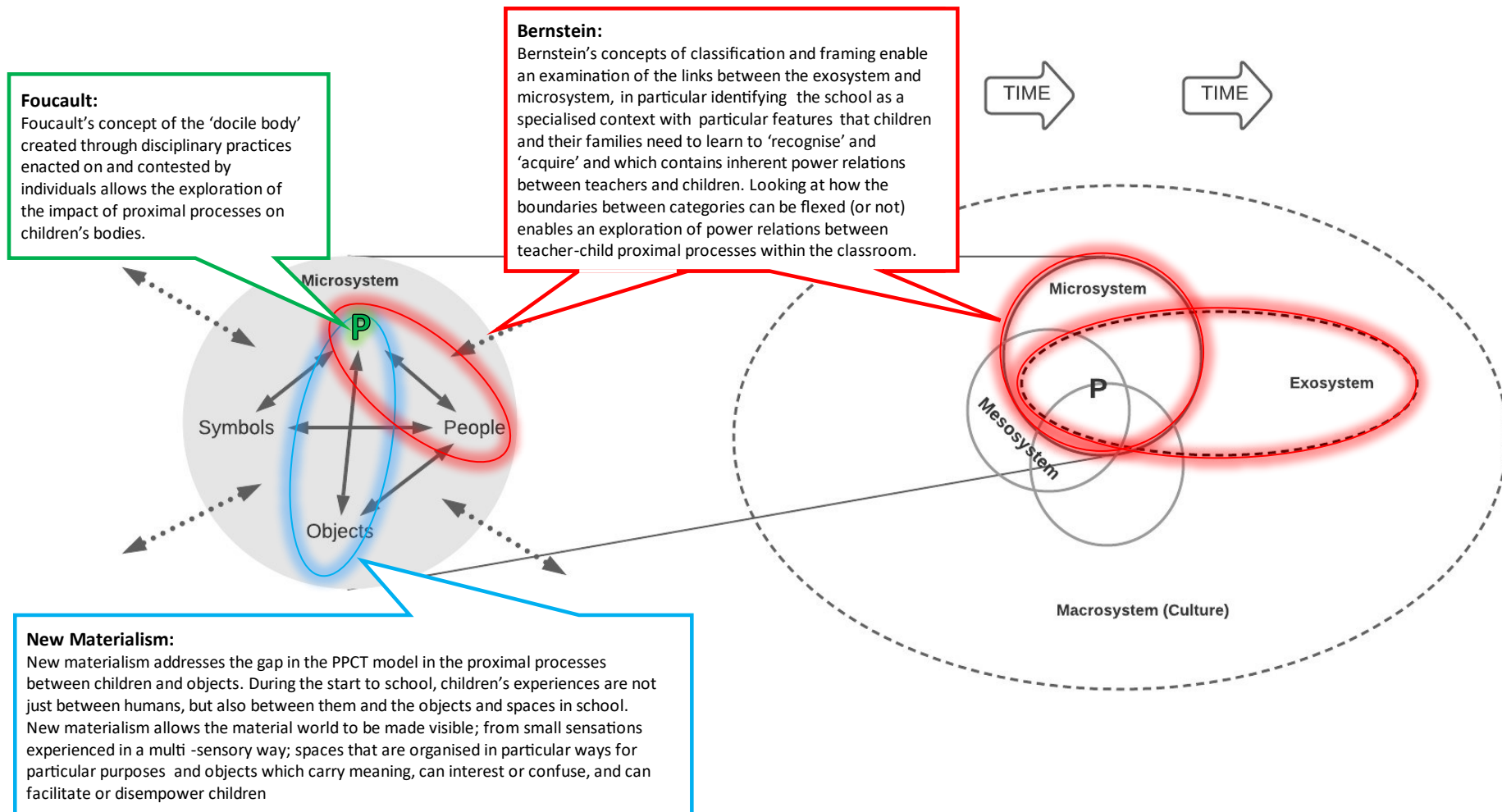


Figure 3 - Integrating Bernstein, Foucault and new materialism with the mature bioecological model

2.5 Transition literature

In this section I review literature on the transition to school that underlines the importance of the age at which children start school, the need for a developmentally appropriate pedagogy, and the way in which top-down pressures in England work against this in practice. I explore the policy context and the focus on ‘school readiness’ that frames relationships between adults in the mesosystem, before reviewing the literature on adults’ and children’s perspectives on starting school. I outline a gap in the literature – the relative absence of the material world and children’s embodied experiences, concluding the section by highlighting the relevance of research on physical development, given the age of children starting school within the English pedagogical context.

2.5.1 The importance of age and a developmentally appropriate pedagogy

Transition presents an opportunity for children to gain confidence in managing change but also an increased risk of the youngest children being impacted negatively (Rogers and Rose, 2007). An international review of research into the impact of relative age on attainment and development identified a significant difference between the youngest and oldest in the academic year, possibly because in the early years ‘developmental differences are greatest’ (Sharp et al., 2009, p7). Indeed, children who are younger in the year are more likely to be identified as needing intervention and having Special Educational Needs (Sharp et al., 2009). Recent evidence suggests that the ‘developmental disadvantage’ of children engaging in formal schooling too soon increases the likelihood of developing speech or behavioural issues (Balestra et al., 2020, p.591). Starting school early does not increase longer term attainment with research finding that formal teaching in reading impacts negatively on enjoyment and later engagement (Alexander, 2010).

Changes to the school admissions code for England in 2011 made it compulsory for local authorities to offer children a place in the September following their fourth birthday if parents requested it (Rose and Rogers, 2012). The relevance of a developmentally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy becomes even more pertinent for the increased number of four-year-olds entering a space originally intended for five-year-olds.

Developmentally appropriate practice emphasises a relational, play-based pedagogy which encourages children to be autonomous in their learning (McGuinness et al., 2014; Alexander, 2010; Pascal et al., 2019). In England, the EYFS curriculum (DfE, 2017b) does endorse a play-based curriculum for children as they start school, however, The Cambridge Primary Review, a comprehensive enquiry into early years and primary education noted that Reception classes were ‘caught between early years developmental principles and key

stage pressures' resulting in many teachers prioritising literacy and mathematics and 'drilling children in school routines' (Alexander, 2010, p.170).

These priorities are driven by top-down pressures related to government data targets and testing. This 'datafication' of Reception 'prioritises measurement', particularly in literacy and mathematics and impacts pedagogical decisions in the classroom (Bradbury, 2019, p.8). During the transition to school, baseline assessments impact on practice; teachers have less time to spend on the settling in process and some avoid teaching the children for the first few weeks to preserve the assessment results (Bradbury and Roberts-Holmes, 2018). The need to collect data also influences decisions about the activities that are set up for children to engage with; instead of starting from children's interests, activities are chosen so that the required data can be gathered (Bradbury, 2019). Requirements relating to GLD and EYFSP (See Chapter 1) mean that teachers must assess and collect data throughout the year to measure children's progress from the baseline assessment to the EYFSP at the end of Reception with the demands of achieving the expected level in literacy and mathematics resulting in a narrowing of the curriculum (Bradbury, 2019). The PSC at the end of Year 1 exerts another top-down pressure on Reception pedagogy; the introduction of this high-stakes test was accompanied with recommendations for a 'rigorous phonics programme for all children at the start of primary school' (DfE, 2012, p.5). This has led to a formal pedagogical approach with direct whole class instruction which begins during transition.

2.5.2 School readiness

A significant focus of transition literature is the concept of 'school readiness'. The conceptualisation of readiness within a particular education system impacts on the start to school for individual children regarding 'Who's ready for what?' (Dockett and Perry, 2002, p.67). However, school readiness is a contested term. Meisels (1999) offers four definitions. The 'Idealist/nativist' model argues that children grow into being ready as they mature. 'Empiricist/environmental' perspectives view school readiness as something to be taught or learned: the focus is on the individual's ability to behave in particular ways and to demonstrate particular skills. The 'social constructivist' model moves the emphasis from the individual to the community, linking readiness to social and cultural context. Finally, an 'Interactionist' model views school readiness as relational, as a dynamic and bidirectional interaction between child, school and wider contexts. This view of readiness concords with Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model emphasising that 'readiness can only be assessed over time and in context' (Meisels, 1999, p.23). Within an 'interactionist' model, the relationships between children, families, school and communities are recognised as crucial to the start to school with the onus being on a collaborative approach to the transition

(Dockett and Perry, 2009). In contrast, government policy in England emphasises adults acting upon the child to make them ready for the demands of school, aligning with an 'empiricist' view of readiness.

2.5.2.1 School readiness in England

In the exosystem, (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) government 'school readiness' policies applying an 'empiricist' concept of school readiness (Meisels, 1999) have yielded a deficit model in which children can be viewed as lacking before they even begin their school lives. The BERA-TACTYC review (BERA-TACTYC, 2017) explores the evolution of the terms 'ready' and 'readiness' in early years policy documentation in the UK, illustrating how 'school readiness' became used increasingly explicitly and frequently between 2013 and 2017. It highlights the shift in thinking that the use of this term reveals and powerfully points out that children being 'ready to learn' (p.91) is not problematised.

These policies offer no clear definition of what it means to be school ready acknowledging there is 'no nationally agreed definition' (Ofsted, 2014, p.6). Instead, the emphasis is on avoiding 'unreadiness' (Tickell, 2011) and expecting adults to ensure children are readied for school (Ofsted, 2014). Partnership working between early years providers and schools is highlighted by Ofsted as a way to achieve 'localised mutual understanding' of expectations when ensuring children are ready for school (Ofsted, 2014, p.5). Yet it is problematic for early years educators and school educators to co-construct meaning around expectations on entry into school; there are often many settings involved in a single transition, and participants may have contrasting and even conflicting views of what it means to be school ready. This tension and 'deep conceptual divide' (Bingham and Whitebread, 2012, p.1) impairs the ability of all participants to work together effectively to support children's transition. McDowall Clark (2017, p.111) advocates for 'genuine dialogue' to co-construct the transition process and what it may mean to be ready for school.

2.5.3 Perspectives of participants in the transition process

Taking an ecological approach to transition recognises the interrelatedness of participants involved in the start to school in a network of interactions: educators in prior-to-school settings, teachers within school, and parents. These interactions between settings form the mesosystem and dynamically influence each other (Rimm-Kaufmann and Pianta, 2000; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). This highlights the need to incorporate the perspectives of all those who are involved in the transition as they all form part of the complex context in which children start school.

2.5.3.1 Adults' perspectives

Parents' perspectives on the transition to school have been explored in a range of studies (Brooker, 2008; Dockett and Perry, 2004; Dockett et al., 2012; Kaplun et al., 2017; Webb et al., 2017). The central role of parents in supporting children's transition to school is widely recognised although there continues to be a need for more research on parents' own experience of their children's transition which can be emotional and intense (O'Toole et al., 2014). Research on parents' experiences as their children start school has focused on the types of change parents experience as their children start school: individual, interactive and contextual (Griebel and Niesel, 2009; 2013; Dockett et al., 2012). These include changes in identity for both child and parents (individual); changes to relationships as some, for example with pre-school staff, are lost and others, for example with teachers, are built (interactive); and how families have to integrate school into their lives often organising the demands of work and other family activities with those of school (contextual).

Classification (Bernstein, 2000) of the transition process structures relationships between teachers and parents including where and when schools allow contact, whether home visits occur, or if parents attend an information meeting within the more 'striated' space of school (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Communication is framed by schools who control what information is shared, where and when (Bernstein, 2000). Parents feel more distanced from teaching staff than nursery staff (Shields 2009; Correia and Marques-Pinto, 2016).

Parents therefore experience transition as a significant life event requiring adjustment within the family as well as for their own identity. Starting school affects relationships between parents and children in various ways, some positive and some challenging, as parents adapt to parenting a school child (Dockett et al., 2012). Children and adults experience the transition in different ways, but those experiences are interlinked and influence each other. To achieve a complete picture of the start to school, therefore, all perspectives need to be included (Dockett and Perry, 2004).

Interactions between educators and parents have also been researched. Dockett and Perry (2004) found that whilst both groups emphasised adjustment to school as key, educators emphasised functioning effectively in a large group of peers whilst parents emphasised adjusting to interactions with different adults. Understanding these perspectives, they argue, is key to moving towards 'genuine collaboration' (p.187). In Ireland (O'Kane and Hayes, 2006), interestingly, teachers' wish was for parents not to focus so much on academic preparation but rather on independence skills. However, although children in Ireland begin school at a similarly early age to England, the early years curriculum, from birth to six years, emphasises play-based learning (O'Farrelly et al., 2019). It is unlikely that this would transfer

to the current climate of performance management in England where targets for individual teachers are related explicitly to children's progress targets in literacy and mathematics.

A need for more research on interactions between families and educational settings at the point of transition, together with recommendations to overcome challenges, has been identified (O'Toole et al., 2014). Strong relationships between the child, home, pre-school and school staff are integral to achieving a positive experience of school transition (Dunlop and Fabian, 2007; Ahtola et al., 2011) therefore it is important that these relationships are included in the research on the start to school.

2.5.3.2 Children's agency in transition and their perspectives

Research to explore children's perspectives as they start school increased with the official recognition of children's rights through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Unicef, 1989). The Convention, ratified by the UK in 1991, enshrined the view of children as active agents with the right to have a say in their own lives although this is presented within the context of a child 'who is capable of forming his or her own views' (Unicef, 1989, p.5). Whilst this could imply that very young children are not yet fully capable of expressing their own views, Alderson (2000) argues that even babies are able to express their views through noises, facial expressions and movements.

Following this increased focus on children's agency, research into starting school looked to explore children's perspectives. Children's ability to influence and act needed to be fully acknowledged (Dunlop and Fabian, 2007). Dunlop (2003) argues that children's agency can act as a bridge during transitions identifying the 'power of the child to act' but also recognising that settings 'place limitations on their actions or create opportunities for agency' (p.84). Whilst recognising that the start to school involves other key participants, children's perspectives are actively sought and foregrounded in order to make visible their lived experience which can differ substantially from adult perspectives (Dockett and Perry, 2005a). This study therefore builds on work carried out from Iceland to Australia exploring transitions into school from children's perspectives (e.g. Dockett and Perry, 2004; Einarsdottir, 2003, 2010; 2011; O'Rourke et al., 2017).

Children's views reveal the importance of knowing and adhering to the new rules of the classroom and school and the shift in balance between play and 'work'. 'Rules' was the category deemed most important by children in the Starting School Project in Australia: children emphasised the need to follow rules set by the teacher and keep out of trouble (Dockett and Perry, 2004). Some children were excited about the prospect of learning the rules of this new environment, however some felt worry and trepidation that they would not

be able to meet those expectations (Einarsdottir, 2003). Overall, following classroom rules was seen by children to be key to becoming a successful school child (Margetts, 2013).

The balance between play and 'work' is often noted in research on children's perspectives of the start to school. In Iceland, children reported a loss of choice, and a reduction in opportunities to play, feeling that they had no influence on what they chose to learn, with play limited to recess (Einarsdottir, 2010; 2011). Play was, however, identified as the most significant aspect of school life for children in Ireland (O'Rourke et al., 2017) where a play-based programme, 'Play to Learn' had been introduced.

Peer relationships are consistently referred to as significant to a smooth transition and an enjoyable school experience (Peters, 2003; Dockett and Perry, 2004; Einarsdottir, 2011; Eskala-Haapanen et al., 2017; O'Rourke et al., 2017). In the Starting School Project (Dockett and Perry, 2004) having friends was identified as important and associated with liking school. This was mirrored in Finland: children identified having friends from pre-school in their classroom as important (Eskala-Haapanen et al., 2017). Research in Ireland consistently found positive peer relationships crucial to children's well-being in school (O'Farrelly et al., 2019) with friends acting 'as gatekeepers to positive aspects of school experiences' (O'Rourke et al., 2017, p.215). O'Farrelly et al. also addressed problematic aspects of peer relationships with children referring to being left out of play, fighting, name calling and pushing. The school experience involved coping with negative experiences and developing strategies to cope. Even more important than friends to the children in this study were the relationships with family members which further suggests the importance of the mesosystem during transition.

Overall, the importance of relationships with families and with peers at the time of transition is well documented in transition literature.

2.5.4 The absence of the body

In contrast to findings on relationships at the time of transition, there is a lack of research on the importance of the material world and children's embodied multisensory experiences of starting school.

The physicality of starting school, defined in Section 2.3.1.2 as an embodied multisensory experience in relation to non-human matter, is not central to most research. Comments about the material world largely remain in the background. Dockett and Perry (2005a) note children's photos of the teachers' chair, the playground, toilet, water fountains and play equipment. O'Rourke et al. (2017, p.213) also identified the 'material elements of school' as

significant as children drew pictures of the classroom, the whiteboard, the toilet and the computer room.

Aspects of physicality in transition research are scattered within a few important studies. In the Australian Starting School Project (Dockett and Perry, 2004), eight categories were identified as being important in the transition process: Knowledge, Adjustment, Skills, Dispositions, Rules, Physical, Family issues, and Educational establishment. The 'Physical' category detailed attributes and skills deemed important by teachers, parents and children. Teachers referred to physical aspects less than parents (7.5% as opposed to 10%) focusing on children being well nourished and well rested and preferably aged at least five-years-old whereas parents focusing on bullying, the safety of the school location and building, and having the appropriate uniform. In addition, parents were concerned about children eating and drinking enough and that their child was likely to be tired as a result of attending for five days.

Children's responses in this category were more numerous than from the adults (16.1%) and revealed concerns about the physical size of the school, physical play and the playground; some said they were afraid of being hurt by 'big kids'. The physical activities that needed to be done before school were also mentioned, for example, getting dressed and having breakfast; uniform was an important element as a sign to others that they were going to 'big school' (p.183). Within other categories were aspects that related to the physicality of being in school. For example, 'Rules', the most important category for children, referred to physical requirements on the body with children listing rules it was important to know such as: 'Not to run in the classroom'; 'you have to know to stand up or sit down when the teacher says'; 'The teacher tells us where to sit and when we have to sit on the floor' and 'you're not allowed to talk when the teacher is talking' (p.178). Within 'Skills' there are references to physical requirements relating to fine motor control for colouring and forming letters, being able to toilet independently, dress themselves and fasten their shoes. This resonates with research by Margetts (2013, p.89) where children identified doing shoelaces, lining up, doing up shoes and responding to bells as important for new children to know as part of 'Knowing about school procedures'.

Although most studies refer to physicality in passing, a few have identified aspects of physicality as key to starting school. Children in Australia identified personal challenges in adjusting to school expectations of independence and self-regulation (Harrison and Murray, 2014). The most challenging was toileting, with up to half expressing negative feelings about going to the toilet in school. This is borne out in the research of Tatlow-Golden et al. (2016) where children transitioning into a school in Ireland (aged four- five-years-old) identified

negative feelings associated with using the toilet. A small number expressed pride in managing the toilet independently, but most were concerned about ‘bursting’, holding on and being worried about having an accident, feeling unsure about going alone, or not having privacy. Other research in Ireland (O’Farrelly et al., 2019) identified the importance children placed on physical independence and self-regulation including managing toileting by themselves, coping with falling down when running in the playground and identifying physical self-regulation that would earn them the label of ‘good’ within school such as having ‘my ears open’ and ‘Be good...sitting on me chair doing what teacher is telling us.’ (p.11); identifying sitting and listening as key skills for successfully becoming a school child.

2.5.5 Physical development

‘Physical development’ refers to a wide range of elements including physical growth in terms of size and proportion, the development of gross motor skills such as sitting and running, and fine motor skills such as grasping and gripping. Given the young age of the children starting school in England (Section 2.5.1) and the top-down pressures impacting the pedagogical approach in Reception classes (Section 2.5.1), children’s physical development takes on particular significance.

Perspectives on physical development are contingent on particular theoretical frameworks. Biological-maturation theories view physical development as a process that takes place naturally within an individual, regardless of context or stimulus (Gesell, 1954). The acquisition of motor skills from an information processing perspective on the other hand, focuses on an input/output model where the cognitive processes of the individual are examined as they interpret information, compare it to prior memories and then carry out a movement (Doherty and Hughes, 2009). In contrast, dynamic systems theory highlights ‘developmental unfolding’ rather than time-specific stages when development will occur, as well as recognising the environment and the requirements of a given task as significant (Doherty and Hughes, 2009, p.195). This resonates with the bioecological perspective of this study as it focuses on the interrelation between the individual, the physical environment, and the demands of a given activity taking place in a particular context (Evangelou et al., 2009). The relationship between a school readiness agenda in England which focuses on the individual being made ready for school, and physical experiences in Reception, is explored in Section 4.3.5.

Physical growth and motor development in individuals follows a broadly predictable sequence, although this varies between individuals so children arriving in school will be at different stages of both growth and motor development. In Reception, children share a physical environment that has not necessarily been adjusted to account for this variety of

size and motor development; indeed much of the school environment is designed for older children. The 'fundamental movement phase' (Doherty and Hughes, 2009, p.203) refers to the age range between two- and six- or seven-years-old when most children develop more control in relation to locomotion, stability and manipulation skills, through maturation and opportunities to experiment and practise these skills (Gallahue and Ozmun, 2005). The physical development required to perform tasks involving writing and sitting still is underpinned by key physical skills which are acquired by movement. To control a pencil, gross motor control of the head, neck, shoulders and arms is needed. Sitting still is one of the hardest skills to achieve for very young children, requiring an advanced level of balance and control (Goddard-Blythe, 2004). This balance mechanism, the vestibular system, 'can *only* be developed by lots of movement.' (O'Connor and Daly, 2016, p.152). Attempts to 'school' children's bodies by practising sitting still at ever younger ages are counter-productive, as the ability to be still is developed through opportunities for spontaneous movement. Even those who are able to sit still at the age of three or four may be using much of their concentration on maintaining this body position making it harder to focus on the required target and causing fatigue (O'Connor and Daly, 2016).

In England, 'Physical Development' is a Prime area in the EYFS (DfE, 2017b) with two sections: Moving and Handling; Health and Self-care. A review of existing literature (Pascal et al., 2019) confirmed the fundamental importance of physical development in the EYFS both to support children's physical and mental well-being and its association with cognitive development and later educational attainment. However, top-down pressures, particularly in relation to literacy and mathematics, threaten to undermine opportunities to play and be active. Pascal et al. (2019, p.28) argue that there is 'little evidence' to justify a greater emphasis in the EYFS on these two areas of learning recommending instead that priority be given to physical development alongside personal, social and emotional development, communication and language and the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Yet, as a result of the overemphasis on cognitive development and the assumption that minds and bodies can be compartmentalised, physical development is often overlooked in practice (O'Connor and Daly, 2016). Bodies are viewed as separate from, and less important to, the brain yet 'Children's minds live in their bodies, so the two are inseparably interlinked' (Nurse, 2009, p.6). The physical experience of individual children as they start school, enter a new environment and encounter the practices and pedagogy in Reception, is a crucial element of the transition to school.

2.6 Summary of transition literature

Research shows the importance of a developmentally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy to promote a positive start to school (Pascal et al., 2019.). Although the EYFS (DfE, 2017b) is a play-based curriculum, this is not always evident in practice (Alexander, 2010); top-down pressures from government targets and the 'datafication' of early years impact on pedagogy in Reception (Bradbury, 2019, p.8). Whilst much research on transition takes an interactionist approach to school readiness, seeing it as a dynamic interaction between child, school and wider contexts, government policy in England takes an empiricist perspective (Tickell, 2011; Ofsted, 2014) expecting adults to act on children to make them ready for school. This results in a deficit model that can see children as lacking or 'unready' and frames relationships between adults required to make them ready.

Studies on parents' perspectives of children starting school have focused on changes parents experience in terms of identity, roles and relationships (Griebel and Niesel, 2009; 2013; Dockett et al., 2012) and compared parents' and educators' expectations and experiences (O'Toole et al., 2014). A wealth of research on children's perspectives recognises their agency and highlights the importance they place on knowing the new 'rules', on the balance between play and 'work, and on relationships, especially those with friends (Peters, 2003).

Within these studies, there have been flashes of data relating to the physical experience of the start to school (Dockett and Perry, 2004); however, these have rarely been the central focus (Harrison and Murray, 2014; Tatlow-Golden et al., 2016). This study therefore seeks to address this gap in research knowledge by examining children's experiences of the physicality of the transition to school. The central focus is of children's embodied experiences as they begin their schooling in England; their interaction with the material world and how the 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.102) of the classroom impacts on their experiences. This study aims to explore the gap in current research literature by examining the embodied experiences of six English children aged four-years-old as they transition from their early years settings to school, against a backdrop of an empiricist school readiness discourse, policies, and practices.

2.7 Research questions

This study started with the aim of exploring experiences of transition in the broadest sense with the overarching research question:

'How do children experience the transition into school in the context of their families and educators?'

Within a bioecological framework, sub questions were created for each participant group:

What is the lived experience of children as they transition into the Reception class?

What proximal processes do children experience within the classroom and wider school during the first few weeks of starting school?

How do parents/carers describe the experience of their child's transition into school?

Within this specific mesosystem, what are the perspectives of teachers and early years educators on the transition process and their role within it?

While engaging with the literature (Section 2.5.4) and in the process of analysing the data (Section 3.7.3.2) the research developed a sharper focus on children's physical, embodied experiences. Whilst the overarching research question remained the same, the sub questions shifted so that they incorporated a specific focus on the physical and embodied experiences of children.

The final sub questions are now:

1.1 What is the embodied experience of children as they transition into a Reception class?

1.2 How do parents and teachers/educators describe this embodied transition?

The following chapter sets out the methodology and methods used to answer these research questions; the overarching research design of the study, the individual methods used, and the process of data analysis.

Chapter 3 Methodology and Methods

This chapter focuses firstly on the overall research design and methodology for the study, explaining how it is informed by the theoretical framework from Chapter 2 and aligns to an interpretivist paradigm. Underlying assumptions about children as rights holders are identified; the power inequalities embedded in my dual role of teacher and researcher are acknowledged before examining how participatory and multiple methods were selected to listen to children as effectively as possible. The rationale for taking a case study approach is explored and the boundaries of the particular case outlined; the participants, locations and the period of time defined as school induction. Ethical considerations are identified, and issues of consent, safeguarding and data storage discussed. Lessons learnt from the initial study are also highlighted in terms of how these informed the main study.

For each method (interviews, observations, draw and talk and photo tours), the rationale, data collection phase and any ethical issues are explained. The study's trustworthiness is considered in terms of its credibility, dependability and confirmability as well as transferability. The final section details the process of applying 'reflexive thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2019) which resulted in an emphasis on the embodied experiences of children starting school.

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Research paradigm

Given the theoretical position outlined in Chapter 2, the transition to school needed to include the multiple perspectives of those experiencing it. These perceptions are embedded in contexts and are dynamic and fluid (Cohen et al. 2011). The concept that reality is socially constructed and therefore not separate from individuals and context aligns ontologically with an interpretivist paradigm (Burgess et al., 2006). Individuals construct their own social world through interactions with others and their environment. Consequently, in line with a bioecological approach, the transition to school needed to be researched in the contexts in which it was taking place.

A qualitative approach was therefore taken, prioritising the lived experience of those involved in transition, through direct participation with their specific contexts or microsystems (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) of early years setting, school and home. The research timing was influenced by the concept of an 'ecological transition' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.26); I carried out research activities before and after children made a physical move to the microsystem of school.

My epistemological position is that knowledge is relational; the process of engaging in research activities enables knowledge to be constructed. The researcher is not aiming to discover a pre-existing 'truth' and humans are not perceived as 'transparently knowable to themselves' (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008, p.502). Interactions between researcher and participants, as with the bidirectionality in the bioecological model, inevitably influence each other; therefore the aim was to reflect on this reflexively rather than attempting to eliminate it. I saw myself as a research tool inevitably impacting on and being impacted by those I was researching.

My roles as previous early years educator, current part time teacher and parent also meant that I could be seen as an 'insider' or 'outsider' depending on who I was interacting with (Section 3.2.). Several methods were used to engage with different groups of participants in the most appropriate way. With adults I used semi-structured interviews (Section 3.5.1) and with the children I used observations (Section 3.5.2), and participatory approaches drawn from the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2001) allowing me to co-construct meaning during the research process: Draw and talk (Section 3.5.3) and Photo tours (Section 3.5.4).

3.1.2 Children as rights holders

Researchers' views of children affect their methodological decisions (Mayall, 2008; Punch, 2002). One assumption of this study was that the experiences of children differed from those of adults (O'Kane, 2008) and therefore children's views needed to be sought directly. My underlying assumption was that children are competent social actors (James and Prout, 1997), capable of communicating their experiences. Children's perspectives on the process of transition are at the core of this research; not only are children capable of communicating those views but they have the right to express them as specified in Article 12 of the UNCRC (Unicef, 1989). Article 12 states children's right to express their views on matters which affect them and to have those views taken seriously (Unicef, 1989; Alderson, 2000). Making space and time for those views to be expressed influenced decisions on the methodology and methods to be used. In the classroom context, Alderson (2000) argues it is extremely difficult to enact this principle as time for listening, choosing and negotiating is limited. To be able to listen to the children, the context of the research encounter as well as the power relations between myself and the children had to be addressed and unsettled.

My position within the process was complex: I had a dual role as teacher and researcher and was already embedded in their world as an adult, with all the power inequalities which that implied. As children, their lives had to be understood within the context of the adults who structured their experiences. Mayall (2008) discusses the divide created by adults grouping people as 'adults' and 'children' in society and emphasises that a crucial element of research

with children is that adults inevitably have power over children. This was particularly true within a school environment and between my role as ‘teacher’ and the children as ‘pupils’. I attempted to unsettle these power relations, particularly in the visual methods of draw and talk and photo tours described in Sections 3.5.3 and 3.5.4 respectively.

3.1.3 Listening to children: multiple and participatory methods

Choosing methods such as observations, draw and talk and photo tours allowed me to ‘tune in’ to more than children’s spoken verbalisations. Observations and photo tours allowed me to record and analyse their physical experiences, noting their bodily reactions and intra-actions with human and non-human matter. In contrast, I chose only one method for adults as they were not the primary focus of the research: interviews.

‘Voice’ was a crucial element in all the methods used. Voice is conceptualised as complex and socially constructed (Komulainen, 2007). ‘Capturing’ the voice of all participants, but particularly children, is problematised by Spyrou (2016) who challenges the assumption that voice is automatically authentic and will allow immediate access into children’s worlds. The complexity and limitations of voice need to be addressed, examining what is ‘contradictory and ambiguous’ as well as what is not said, ‘the silent’, (Spyrou, 2016, p.109 and p.113). This does not mean the perspectives of others should not be explored, but that voice is embedded in the social context in which it was constructed, and attention should be paid to all aspects of what is said – or not said. Decisions in the methodology were informed by this view including transcribing verbatim in as much detail as possible in order to be able to analyse pauses, silences and possible contradictions.

Participatory methods with children build on the concept of a ‘pedagogy of listening’, with the child seen as strong and competent (Rinaldi, 2006, p.15). The rationale for the use of multiple methods, observations, draw and talk sessions and photo tours, was to create a more complete picture of the child’s experiences, and their perspectives. Participatory methods were chosen with the goal of listening to children as effectively as possible, emphasising the relational, and valuing multimodal interactions between researcher and children to share and construct meaning together. Viewing the children as capable of engaging with these methods and having the right to do so aligns with the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2001) which uses a range of methods to gain insight into children’s experiences in a particular place at a particular time.

Multiple methods also acknowledged that children have preferences for how they communicate (Crivello et al., 2009). In addition, ‘facet methodology’ (Mason, 2011, p.76) identifies how differing lines of investigation can be explored around the central research

problem to create ‘flashes of insight’ and build a ‘multi-dimensional’ understanding of lived experience. The multiple methods did not replicate data but provided different ways of exploring the transition process; in this sense the methods complemented each other and created a broader range (Darbyshire et al., 2005). For example, I carried out an observation on the event of their first service (assembly), discussed it as part of draw and talk, and children took photos of the space and objects associated with it during their photo tour.

3.1.4 Case study approach

I chose a case study approach to the question ‘*How do children experience the transition into school in the context of their families and educators?*’ so the start to school could be explored within its real-life context. Case studies give ‘unique examples of people in real situations’ (Burgess et al., 2006, p.59) and in this research, allowed the examination of individual children’s experiences as they began to attend Reception. Case studies necessarily focus on a particular time and place (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 2018) leading to criticisms relating to generalisability. However, it is this very uniqueness that is so important in this study; it allows for a detailed exploration of the lived experience of individual children in the contexts in which they experience the start to school. The role of the researcher is often questioned in case studies but Flyvbjerg (2006) identifies ‘subjective bias’ (p.234) as a key misunderstanding; close proximity and immersion in the context tends to lead to new understandings rather than confirming ‘preconceived notions’ (p.237). However, the tacit knowledge and position of the researcher needs to be made explicit throughout the research process. Detailed description of the processes of data collection and analysis are key to enhancing the dependability and confirmability (Section 3.6.2) and transferability (Section 3.6.3) of the study. Limitations of this particular study are discussed in Section 6.1.

Focusing on a small number of children, six in total, enabled a rich and detailed exploration within their context; it was not possible or desirable to separate the context from the phenomenon of transitioning to school (Yin, 2018). Definitions of case study types vary (Cohen et al., 2011; Schwandt and Gates, 2018) however this study could be defined as a ‘single embedded case’ design (Yin, 2018). A feature is a focus on a single case with ‘sub-units’; in this instance the ‘sub-units’ would be the participants. This language however jarred with my interpretivist approach; the design was intended to explore and better understand the perspectives of the individuals experiencing transition through active participation with them. Exploring the experience of six children enabled me to engage in observations and activities which resonated with my understanding of knowledge as constructed as well as with the reflexive thematic analysis approach (Section 3.7). The researcher’s subjectivity and presence were overt and part of the research process.

Asymmetrical power relations were embedded in this research as I was researching in my workplace; I was both teacher and researcher in this microsystem. This brought benefits: for example, my choice to use photo tours was informed by my previous practice experience using the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2001) as a way to listen to children about issues that impacted on them within an early years setting. As discussed earlier (Chapter 1), I had been a part of the Reception classroom team over ten years as a parent, a volunteer and then part-time teacher which meant I was familiar with systems and practices within school and in relation to transition. The challenge with such 'prolonged engagement' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p.192) was to see the experience of transition in a new way, from the children's perspectives through 'persistent observation' (p.192) combined with multiple other sources.

In my position of 'participant-as-observer' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.457) I was seen as an insider, as part of the teaching staff. It was challenging at times as I was explicitly asked to move into the teacher role when in the class as a researcher. The balance between participant and observer changed not only across different days but even within a single session of observation. For the events of lunch and service I aimed to be more detached, still an insider yet seeking a balance between observation and participation defined as 'Moderate Participation' by Spradley (1980, p.60). Events where I planned to observe from more of a distance were still punctuated with moments of interaction; in lunch children spoke directly to me and in service they smiled and waved. My presence was overt and acknowledged; I wore different clothing when in the role of researcher (Section 3.2.1.1) and when observing during free play, I would write notes in my notebook, interact with the children and then return to taking notes. Writing notes was sometimes incorporated into their play such as in Figure 4 when Jim asked to use my biro and made notes on an adjoining page.

'I maded a line. This side is yours and this is mine.'

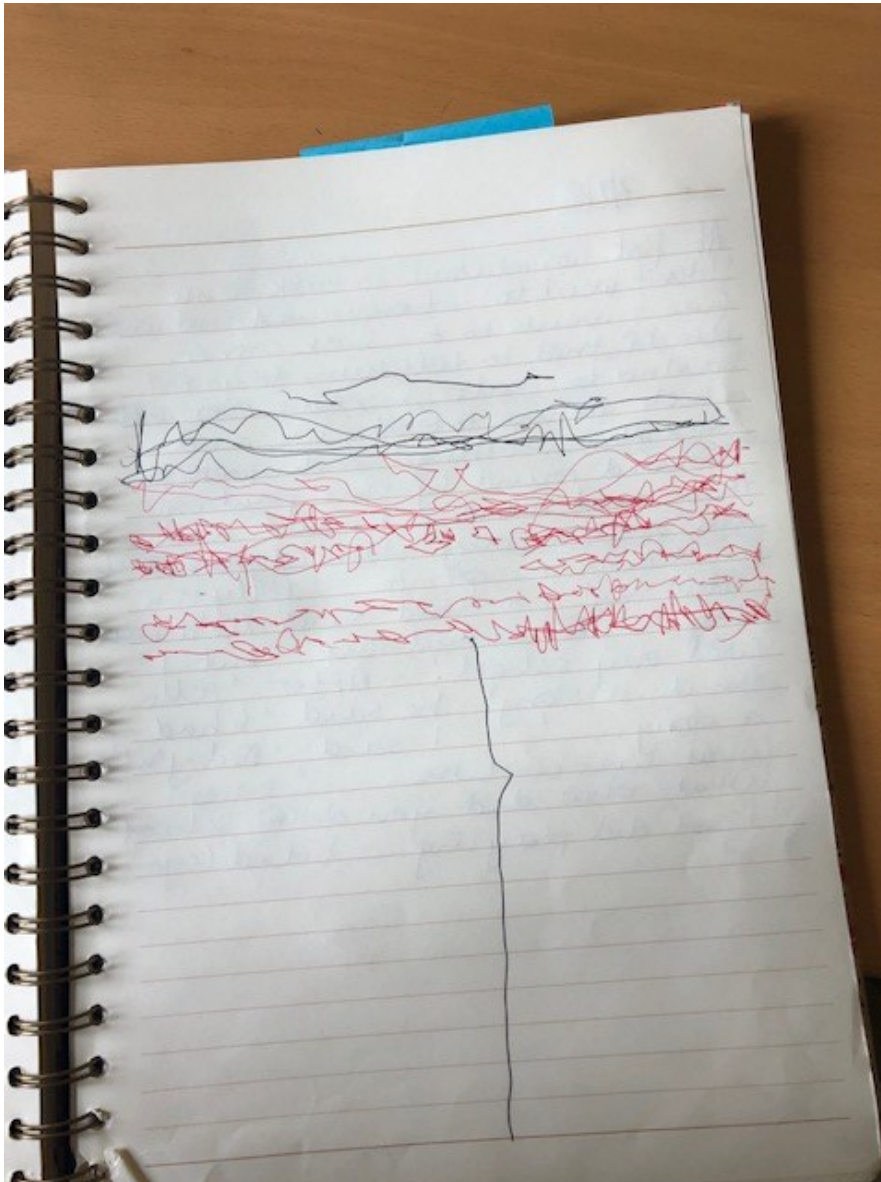


Figure 4 - Jim's "notes" in my notebook

My dual role impacted too on the interviewing process; there was variability in the power imbalance depending on who I was interviewing and the extent to which I was regarded as an insider. Early years educators viewed me as part of school staff but also as someone 'in the know' who was knowledgeable about early years because of my experience running a nursery. For example, Emma referred directly to my previous role in nursery 'I don't know if it's the same as you did in your nursery', as did Jill 'Well you know what it's like in early years.' With the teaching staff, who were all colleagues, I was seen as part of the team although not as someone in a position of influence as I was part-time and not the main class teacher. My relationship with parents was inevitably asymmetric in that I was their child's teacher one day a week. It was challenging when on one occasion I was asked for

information because of my position as class teacher and I reflected on this in my research diary. The diary offered a useful tool to record my responses to data collection, allowing challenges and personal emotions to become more explicit and visible.

'It was hard to keep a boundary between my role as teacher and role as researcher as she asked me directly whether Cassandra listened in class. I answered 'Yes' briefly and reminded her that parents' eve was coming up. She also asked about procedures for bookworm day and I advised her to send a note to the main teacher.'
(Research diary 30/10/18)

Selecting the interview locations was an important part of mitigating the asymmetrical nature of the relationships particularly with the parents. I interviewed educators at their place of work and invited parents to be interviewed in the less formal atmosphere of their homes where they would be in control of the space; five of the six parents chose this option, one asked to meet in pre-school.

The 'phenomenon of interest' (Yin, 2018, p.15) was the transition to school. 'Bounding the case' (Yin, 2018, p.31) involved specifying the time period, the physical contexts and the individuals involved. The five-month research period was from June 2018 when parents began to visit school for information meetings until the half term in October when children were attending fulltime. With the physical contexts the main focus was on the Reception classroom, however from a bioecological viewpoint this needed to be expanded to include the early years settings and the wider school. It could have been expanded even further to include the home; however, ethical constraints and practicalities of access and time played a part in research design decisions. Recognising that children experience the start to school alongside their significant adults I included each child's key person from their early years setting, parent(s) and receiving teachers (Figure 5). Although parent/carer was intended to invite a range of caregivers, it was predominately mothers who participated; one dad popped into one interview for a few minutes.

3.1.4.1 Participants

Six children were selected, all of whom were starting in the same Reception class. For each child, their parent(s), early years educator and receiving teacher also became participants, with a final total of six parents, four early years educators, and three teaching staff.

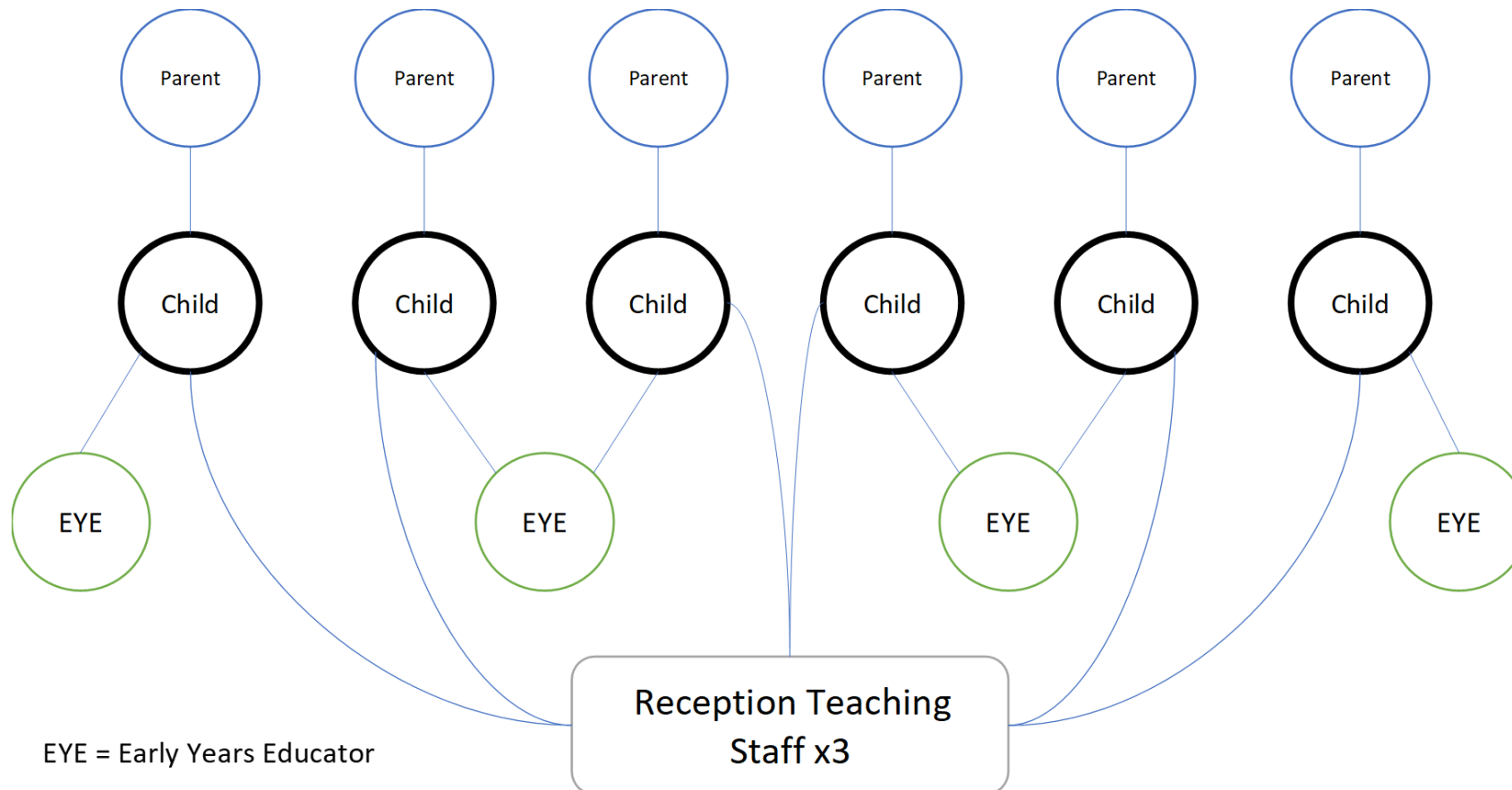


Figure 5 - Diagram of participants and their relationships

3.1.4.2 Selection of child participants

Children were chosen in collaboration with early years educators, three from each nursery and pre-school (Table 1). Each child had to be enrolled at the specified First school. I asked for difference in how vocal the children were, aiming to avoid only hearing voices of verbally confident children. Nursery mentioned they had selected children who were all with the same key person to make it easier for me, so I was able to explain that I wanted a wider range and was happy to accommodate that. A limit of the study, however, was that parents of the invited children were generally perceived as approachable and supportive of their child's education rather than those who may be deemed more 'hard-to-reach'. After two meetings, three children were invited from each setting; details of each child who chose to participate are shown below.

It is important to note that the whole cohort of this Reception class was perceived by teaching staff to be the most confident and well-adjusted cohort in school: the easiest to settle in and the most independent.

Table 1 - Overview of child participants

Name of child (pseudonym)	Age at induction afternoon	Age on first day of school	Position in family	Friendships	Nursery or pre-school	Name of early years educator (pseudonym)	Parent/carer interviewed
Albert	4 years 6 months	4 years 8 months	Older of two	Strong friendships with Xavier, Sean - parents are friends	Pre-school	Jill	Mum
Cassandra	4 years 0 months (did not attend - on holiday)	4 years 2 months	Older of two	Knows Jim from nursery	Nursery	Tess	Mum
Jim	4 years 2 months	4 years 5 months	Older of two	Knows Cassandra from nursery	Nursery	Tess	Mum, Dad
Olivia	4 years 1 week	4 years 3 months	Youngest of three; two older brothers at school	Knows Albert, Sean and Xavier from pre-school. Other friends starting school too.	Pre-school	Jill	Mum
Sean	4 years 5 months	4 years 7 months	Youngest of two; one older sister at school	Strong friendships with Albert, Xavier - parents are friends	Nursery and Pre-school	Karen	Mum
Xavier	3 years 10 months	4 years 2 weeks	Second of three; one older sister at school	Strong friendships with Albert, Sean - parents are friends	Pre-school	Emma	Mum

3.1.4.3 Locations

Research took place in three educational settings; a nursery, a pre-school and a school. In line with Bronfenbrenner's concept of a microsystem as encompassing a particular 'pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.22), this section describes the particular physical features characterising each setting. Firstly the resources and spaces in which activities could occur, followed by the way children were grouped in relation to adults and the children's role in making decisions about how to interact with their environment.

Nursery

The 100 place privately owned nursery microsystem was in a rural location surrounded by fields. It operated from 7am until 6.30pm all year for children from three months to thirteen years. School children could attend for wraparound care. Meals were cooked on site. The nursery is the only large provider of full day-care; therefore it has a wide catchment area and children who attend move onto a range of local state and private schools.

Physical features of this microsystem were two large indoor spaces were set up with a range of continuous provision which supported the areas of learning from the EYFS (DfE, 2017b). For example one room had a book corner, an area used for expressive and creative arts near the sink and areas which were used for construction. Resources, such as pots of pens and pencils, were accessible for children to choose throughout the session. The other room had a home role play area and dressing up clothes to choose from and was also used to sing songs, listen to stories or to carry out some phonics or number work. Between the two rooms was a cloakroom where children hung their bags and accessed the toilets. Outside, there were large, grassed play areas containing a wooden train for climbing and role playing on, a log trail for balancing, a vegetable patch and poly-tunnel, trees, dens and areas for chickens.

With regard to roles and relationships, children were grouped according to age; in Kindergarten, where this research took place, there were approximately 40 children per session aged three and four. Children were organised into smaller groups with a key person responsible for each; they spent about half an hour per session in this smaller group. For most of the session, children could choose to be outside which they accessed independently as doors were left open. Part of each day was spent tending to the vegetables and feeding the chickens.

Pre-school

The 24 place pre-school microsystem was in a rural location and had moved to be on the same site as the First school in 2016. It had just been formally included into the local Multi-Academy Trust at the time of the research. It operated from 7.45am until 6pm during school term time for children aged two- five-years-old. Meals were cooked in the school kitchen for the pre-school. Most children who attend move onto the First school.

The physical space of this setting was much smaller than the nursery with between 12 and 20 children attending per session.. The pre-school followed the EYFS (DfE, 2017b) and had similar activities to the nursery for children to access; a shop role play area, a book corner, an area for expressive and creative arts and areas for construction. The indoor room had access to a self-contained outdoor area with a sandpit, a wooden house used for role play and scooters for children to use down a ramp. Other activities were rotated into the space on different days, such as water play and construction resources.

Socially, the children were not organised according to age but did have a designated key person; they spent about 20 minutes of the session in these smaller groups. Children could choose to play inside or outside for most of the day.

School

The microsystem of the First school, for children aged between 4 and 9, was situated in a small village in a rural location surrounded by fields. There were about 140 children on roll and 26 in the Reception class at the time of this study.

The physical features of the school were a large playing field, a vegetable garden, a small Forest school area and an outside swimming pool used from June to September. As a Church of England school, it had strong ties to the local church and Christian activities were embedded in the microsystem. Prayers were woven into the daily routine with a lunchtime and hometime prayer. Christian worship was practised three times a week as a whole school and referred to as 'service'. This took place in the hall at the end of the school day.

As with the previous two microsystems, the school followed the EYFS (DfE, 2017b) curriculum; the classroom was set up to incorporate a book corner, painting/making area, carpeted construction area, dressing up materials and six computers along the back wall. The main carpet area was situated in front of the teacher's chair and used for registering and whole class teaching including for phonics and number.

Roles differed in this setting in that a key person system was not used. The Reception class had a teacher and two teaching assistants; one for the morning and one for the afternoon. Children were organised into two groups of 13 for induction. Adult led activities took place for part of each session. Otherwise, children chose to access the continuous provision inside and, at designated times, could also choose to be outside.

Outside classroom

A covered outside area adjoined the Reception classroom, referred to as the outside classroom (Figure 6). Permission to take photos of the site was only granted in the school location. It contained a mud kitchen area, foam building bricks, wheelbarrows and a sand pit. Other activities were set up each day and rotated, for example, colouring sheets and pencils, and there was space in the middle for riding on wheeled toys or playing ball games. Children could play here in groups of up to eight at designated times.



Figure 6 - the 'outside classroom'

Hall

The hall (Figure 7) was the largest indoor space in school and was used for lunchtime and whole school service. The kitchen was at the far end with a counter and wooden step for the children to step up to collect their lunch. Around the edge of the space were stacked chairs, PE benches and a table for use in service with candles, a snuffer and a CD player. The floor was grey lino which often reflected the light from the large windows along either side. At lunchtime, large tables were set up in rows with narrow pathways. On the right-hand side was a trolley with several bowls on it. Children scraped any unfinished food into one bowl, dropped their cutlery into another and stacked their empty trays. On the window was an envelope containing stickers which were given to children who had eaten all their lunch.



Figure 7 - The hall

Large playground



Figure 8 - The large playground

The large playground area (Figure 8) was used for playtimes when more than one class was out. The physical equipment comprised a climbing tower, climbing frame, a wooden rope bridge, large wooden pencils for chasing around and a small house.

3.1.4.4 School Induction Process

For this study, I have defined the school induction process as taking place over the period from May to October 2018 starting with the first parents' information evening, including the staggered entry programme and concluding with the introduction of the full phonics programme (Figure 9).

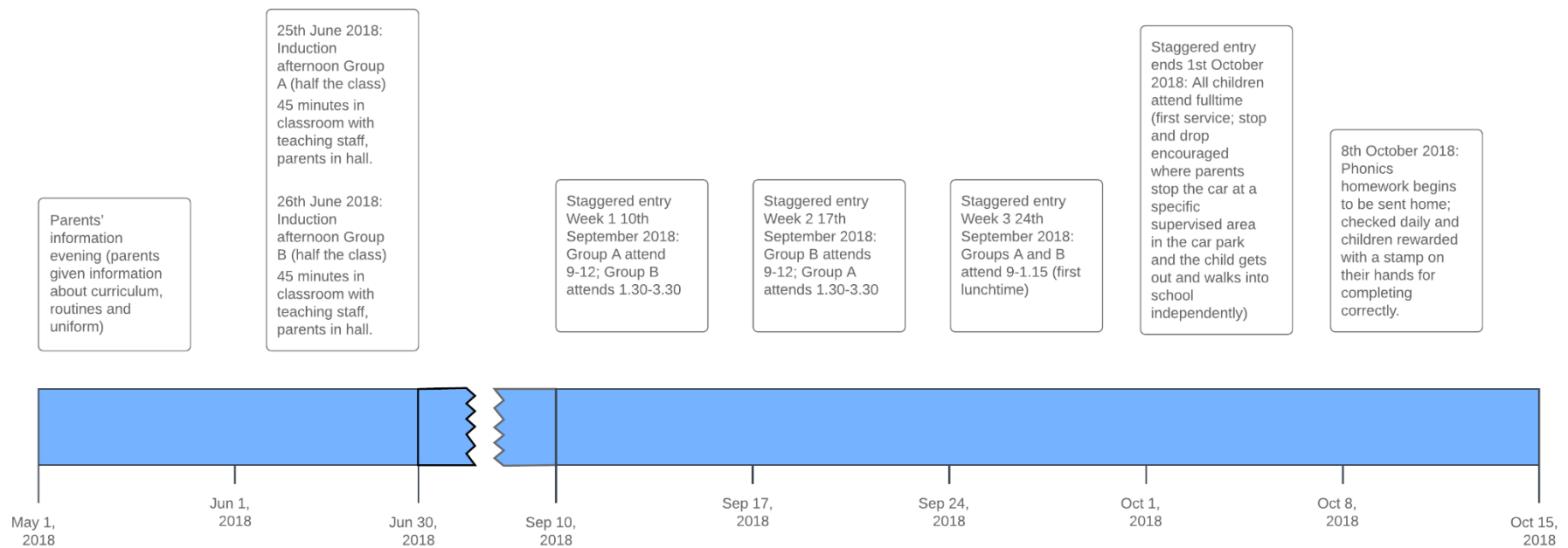


Figure 9 - Timeline of school induction process

3.2 Ethical considerations

In this section, issues of consent, power relations, safeguarding and data storage are discussed, including ongoing ethical decisions for each method used in the study.

My embedded practitioner-researcher perspective was an important area of reflexivity; whilst my 'insider researcher' role (Hellawell, 2006) was beneficial in terms of the depth of my knowledge about the setting, there was a power imbalance. As I was a part time teacher within the school, invited parents might feel they 'should' participate. I therefore provided parents with the option of declining in writing via a third party. It was reassuring that one parent did so (stating concern about the length of time data would be held, suggesting the messaging was clear on data management). Each interview started by reiterating my current role as researcher, rather than teacher, so participants were clear that information they gave was not going to be shared with school. I received permission from the Open University's Human Research Ethics Committee to proceed (HREC/2847/Preece).

In addition to following BERA guidelines (2011; 2018) and HREC recommendations I worked through an ethical reflection framework (Stutchbury and Fox, 2009) with prompts in four domains Consequential; Deontological; Relational and Ecological. These were particularly useful for thinking through the impact on relationships which were also key to my professional role with teachers and parents, for example 'Avoiding imposition' meant I ensured I offered a range of times for parent interviews to try to minimise intrusion and 'Showing fairness' meant I interviewed multiple teaching staff to avoid recognition of one teacher's identity.

Gaining informed consent involved discussion with gatekeepers before selecting child participants and seeking consent from their keyperson and parents (Figure 10). Children are legally able to give assent only. However, I have chosen to use the term consent throughout to recognise children's agency and rights in the research process.

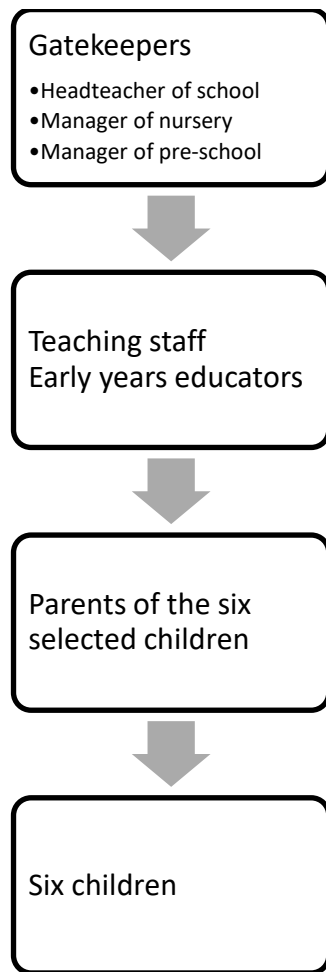


Figure 10 - Stages of gaining consent

An information sheet and consent form were given to all participants (Appendix 1). I explained the research directly to the gatekeepers and educators; the first explanation to parents was carried out by the nursery/ pre-school managers to mitigate any sense of obligation to participate. Key issues around the purpose of the study, right to withdraw, maintaining anonymity and how data were to be stored, used and destroyed were explained. Pseudonyms were used and names of settings and local towns were not used. I was alert to a key concern relating to anonymity: photos of other children in the setting being taken during photo tours. However, children largely chose to take pictures of objects; one photo was deleted because it was of a child who had recently left the school and therefore could not give consent.

3.2.1 Ethical research with young children

Children's perspectives on the process of transition are at the core of this study and they are viewed as 'experts in their own lives' (Langsted, 1994; Clark and Moss, 2001) and, as enshrined in law by Article 12 of the UNCRC, as having the right to be heard and their views to be taken seriously (Unicef, 1989). Lundy et al. (2011) identify four elements that should be

considered throughout the research process to adhere to a rights-based approach: space, voice, audience, and influence. To make the research *space* as inclusive and safe as possible, adjustments were made during data collection (Section 3.5.3.1). *Voice*, the opportunity for children to express their views, was encouraged by using participatory methods (Section 3.1.3). Although children were not involved in the initial research design, the aim was to keep the data collection stage as open ended as possible to explore issues and perspectives which were important to them. Listening to these views, referred to as *audience*, was achieved through active listening during data collection, and by transcribing verbatim during the data analysis process (Section 3.7.1). The final element, *influence*, emphasises that the views of participants should be acted on; this resonates with general ethical requirements to complete the research and to share findings with others.

3.2.1.1 Ongoing consent from children

Ethical considerations continued throughout the research process (Rossman and Rallis, 2010). Discussing the child information sheet (Appendix 2) each time helped to demarcate when I was in the role of researcher rather than teacher, creating a focal point for sharing with the six children and leading to conversations about what I wanted to find out and why. Olivia asked more about it:

Olivia: What's that again? (points to sad face on child information sheet)

Researcher: This one? This means you're allowed to say if you don't want to do it. You can say 'Yeah I want to come and do it' or you can say 'No thanks I don't want to do it'.

Olivia: When can I do photos?

In the school setting I needed to distinguish between my role as researcher and teacher especially if adults treated me as if I were there to teach. An action I took was to wear 'non-teacher' clothing, blue jeans and trainers, and was explicit with the children that this showed I was not a teacher today, I was here to find out about starting school. The children connected this to the time I interviewed their parents at home '*like when you were in my kitchen*' (Cassandra) '*And you came to my house*' (Jim) and started referring to this outfit as my 'finding out' clothes, '*You're in your finding out clothes today Mrs Preece!*' (Sean). Wearing these consistently for research purposes also made it clearer for staff when I was there to research rather than teach (Figure 11).



Figure 11 - 'Finding out' clothes (captured unintentionally by Sean during photo tour).

It was harder to gain consent from children when observing them during usual classroom activities because they were unused to being asked and seemed perplexed by it. I was careful to watch for cues during observations and activities that they did not want to participate. Being overt about my role helped, for example, when observing lunch, Jim saw me with my notebook and said *'You did writing at my nursery'* and I said *'Yes and now I'm writing about you at school. Is that ok?'* He replied *'Yes'*. Children also chose to leave activities; Xavier and Sean left draw and talk when Albert chose to stay on for three minutes. During the photo tours, at one point, Albert said he wanted to stay and play with his friends instead.

3.2.1.2 Tension between educators' expectations and researcher's expectations

As researcher, I looked for cues from the children about whether they were comfortable with the activity or whether they wanted to withdraw and encouraged them to follow their wishes. There was a tension, however, between this and the lack of choice usually given in the classroom. As class teacher in this school, I was expected to ensure every child participated in every planned activity and an expressed desire to decline would not generally have been accepted. My research diary records that Sean said he did not want to talk to me but that an adult had tried to tell him to go with me.

'I felt uncomfortable as I had to explicitly tell the adult that he was free to make this choice and it was fine if he chose not to do it at all.' (Research diary 2.7.18)

An unexpected ethical challenge was negotiating with the class teacher when research could take place. In the initial study I was encouraged to carry out the photo tours during 'Golden

time' which was a favourite time of the week for the children as they could select what they wanted to play with. My research was therefore taking them away from a time when they were in control of their own learning. For the main study I deliberately carried out the photo tours earlier, when 'work' and 'play' were not so clearly defined. Nevertheless, this was still a challenge with one tour being interrupted by an adult asking 'Are they still with you?' because they needed to create a Christmas card before playtime.

Another way that I tried to disrupt the power dynamics was to change the research activity location (Section 3.5.3.1) from the more 'striated' space of the classroom to the 'smooth' space of a carpeted alcove. This was another example of the importance of the research diary as I reflected on session 1 and made improvements for session 2.

'The draw and talk session didn't go as well as I'd hoped- there were too many interruptions from other children, the noise levels were high (Some of the audio is inaudible) and children responded as if this was a non-negotiable activity rather than an enjoyable sharing of experiences. Also ended up having to leave the activity twice to deal with other children having conflicts over sharing issues on the carpet. See if I can use one of the carpeted alcoves and try again in 2 weeks time.' (Research diary 1.10.18)

3.2.2 Safeguarding

As a member of school staff, I held DBS certification, completed annual safeguarding training, and could draw on 24 years of teaching to help build appropriate relationships with children and parents. Involving early years educators in the selection process meant no child with safeguarding concerns was included. I safeguarded myself by applying The Open University's lone working guidance.

3.2.3 Data Storage

I reviewed my data management plan (created on 14/3/18) to ensure I was in line with the new GDPR guidelines and 2018 BERA guidelines. Data files were encrypted and stored on a password protected laptop. Once audio recordings had been transcribed, they were deleted. Participants were informed data would be destroyed on completion of my studies.

3.3 Initial study

An initial study (2017) trialled my proposed methods to identify issues arising; participants were two Reception children, their parents and their early years educator. This identified the richness of data from draw and talk and photo tours and highlighted the importance of spending time with children after the photo tours so they could select and delete photos.

Observations confirmed the importance of key areas such as the carpet during whole class time, as well as of focusing on 'Firsts' and 'critical moments' (Thomson et al., 2002; Payler, et al., 2016). 'Firsts' refers to events and activities that transitioning children experience for the first time: their first time in school during the induction afternoon, their first session in school as a school child, the first time when the whole class attends, the first lunch, the first full day and the first experience of service. 'Critical moments' are significant or pivotal moments in participants' lives that invite closer examination. This enabled me to be alert to such telling moments in the main study that would potentially offer insight into children's lived experience.

Interviewing adults identified the need for further reflexivity before the main study to address emotional reactions that the topic triggered:

I nearly cried today as Charlotte's Mum said she was sad. It wasn't just what she said but how she said it- it filled the air and took me right back to when I felt like that with my son. Had not expected that so need to write and reflect a bit more on my past experiences.' (Reflective diary 7/11/18)

Transcribing verbatim and analysing transcripts revealed interview skills I needed to practise such as leaving silences rather than jumping in to fill gaps. The transcripts themselves also confirmed the co-constructive nature of the interviews. One parent answered that her child had not shown signs of tiredness when starting school but then later in the interview wondered if tiredness had contributed to her behavioural changes. In this way the questions themselves shaped and impacted on the views and answers she gave (Mann, 2016). This informed the decision to transcribe verbatim in the main study so nuances could be explored transparently.

3.4 Timeline of data collection

Data collection is presented visually over the next two pages: Figure 12 presents data collected before children started school and Figure 13, data collected after children started school.

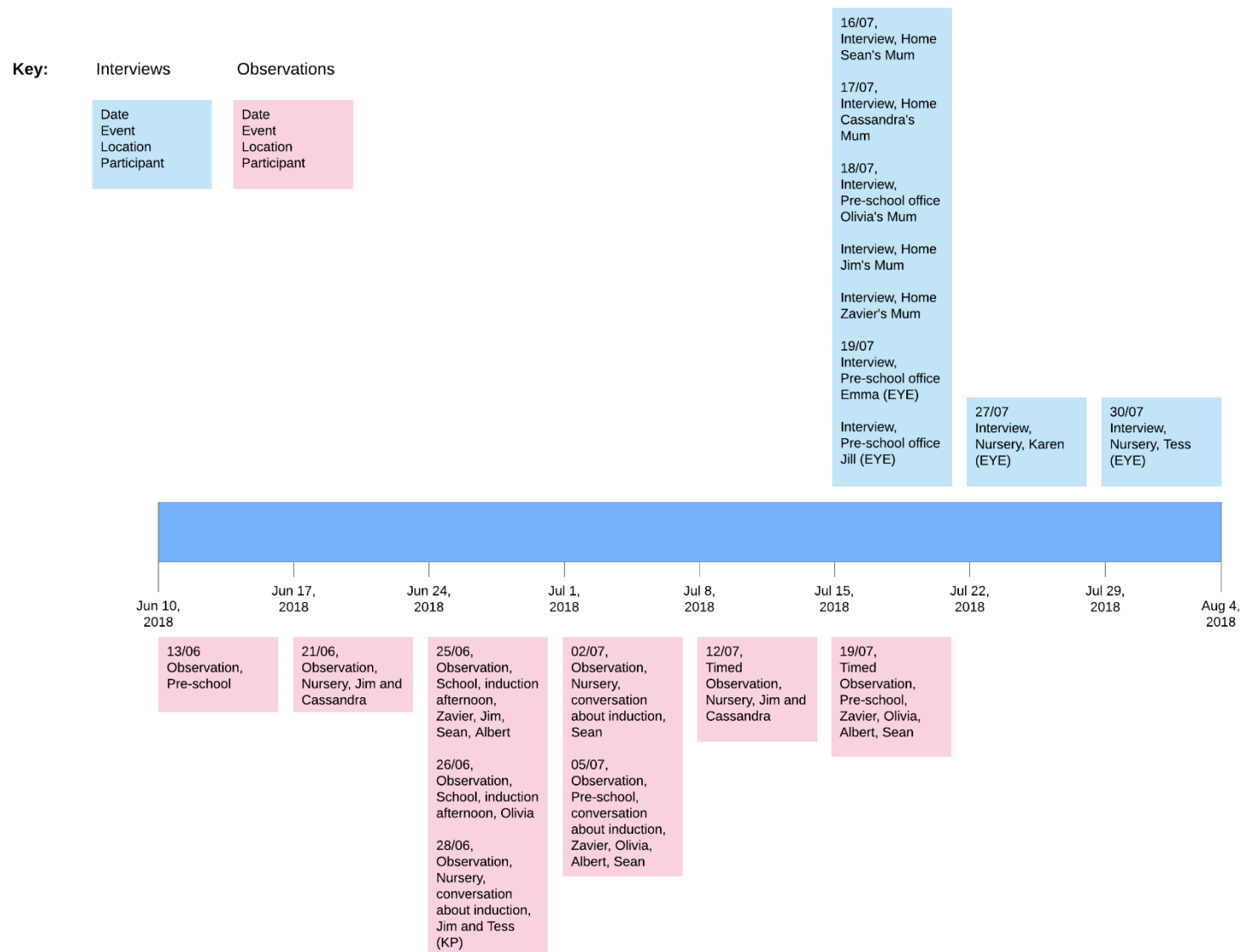


Figure 12 - Timeline of data collection before children start school

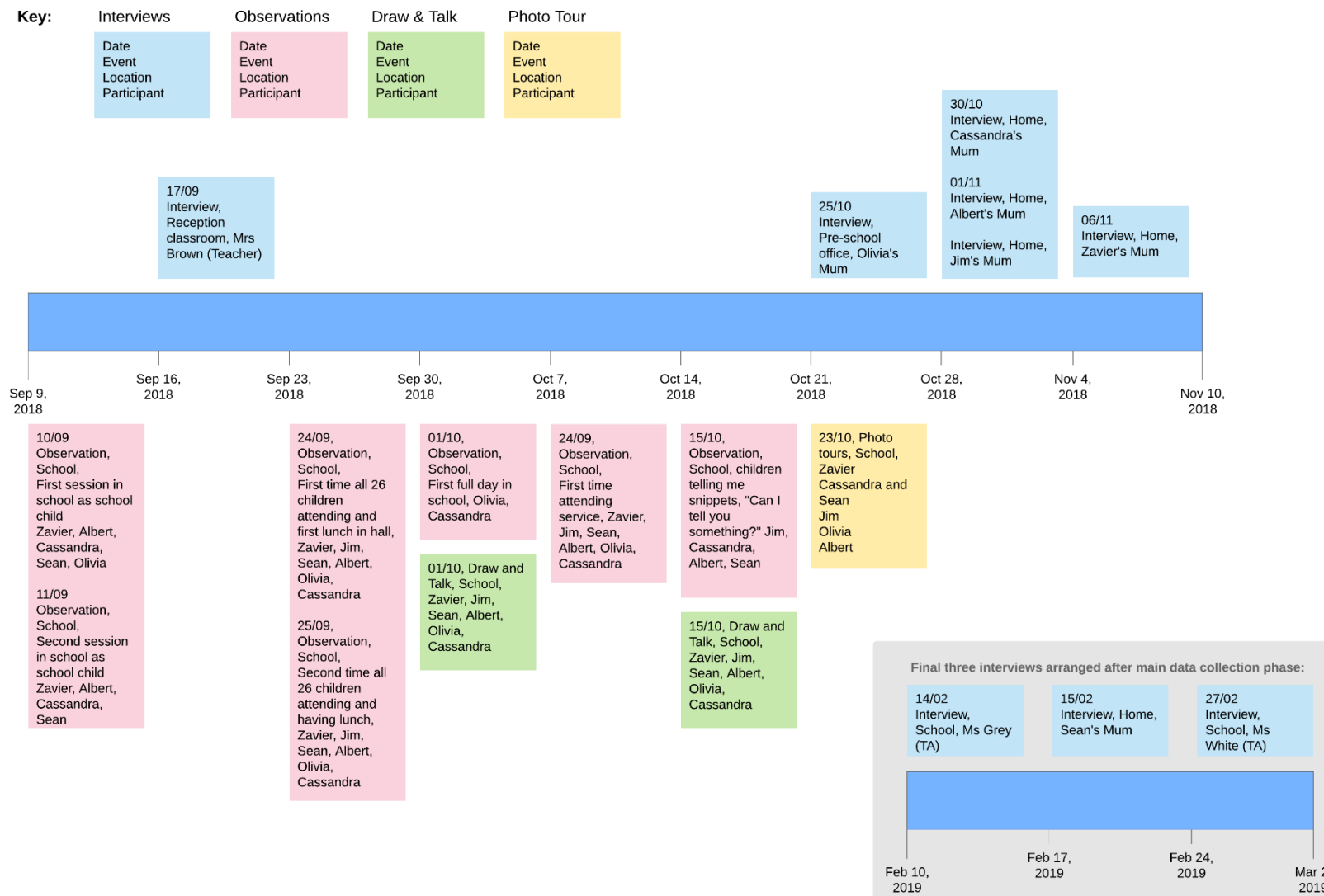


Figure 13 - Timeline of data collection after children start school

3.5 Methods

To address the overarching research question, *How do children experience the transition into school in the context of their families and educators?* and its embodiment-related sub-questions, the study used interviews, observations, draw and talk and photo tours (Table 2).

Table 2 - Methods used to address research questions

Research questions	Methods used
1.1 What is the embodied experience of children as they transition into a Reception class?	Observations in nursery and pre-school before the children started school Observations in school (classroom, hall) once children started Draw and talk sessions Photo tours
1.2 How do parents and teachers/educators describe this embodied transition?	Parents: Interviews before child started school and after first half term Educators: Interview before children left the setting Teaching staff: Interview after children started school.

3.5.1 Interviews

Interviews are a staple qualitative research method to gain understanding of a participant's views, beliefs or experiences (Mann, 2016; Cohen et al. 2011). In using semi-structured interviews my aim was to explore the transition process in terms of adult participants' own feelings and how they felt the children had experienced it. I did not assume children's perspectives needed adult validation but rather that this would present another 'facet' (Mason, 2011) of the transition process. Time and space were created to have a 'professional conversation' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

The contrasting metaphors of a 'miner' or a 'traveller' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) represent concepts of a researcher either collecting and 'mining' pre-existing data from the interviewee or 'traveling' with the interviewee and constructing knowledge with them during the interview process. I viewed knowledge as a co-construction and my role as an active participant in the process (Braun and Clark, 2013). It was therefore important to be explicit about the relationship dynamics, to create a full transcript verbatim and, when analysing, to pay attention not only to the words of the interviewee but to my questioning, comments, and the spaces in between. Appendix 3 contains an excerpt from an interview transcript.

The conversational exchange was also constructed with others who popped in and out of the interview space. Children ran in and out of some parent interviews, sometimes collecting things to show me: Jim brought me dinosaur books and his mum referred some questions to him to add detail, for example 'What's their name?' The nonhuman dictaphone was also part of the dynamic. All the adults consented to the dictaphone being used; however, two kept glancing towards it uneasily. Although this may have affected how they answered questions, it also made it clear that their words were going to be used for research purposes.

It has been argued that the lack of standardisation in the flexibility of semi structured interviews is a limitation (Cohen et al., 2011; Patton, 2015). However, their flexibility was essential to answer my research questions, allowing individuals to share the experiences and perspectives significant to them.

The interview schedule (Appendix 4) re-established my role and the ethical guidelines followed by an open-ended query about transition so participants could talk about what was important to them. Participants' responses varied greatly in length. Prompts attempted to help some participants to expand on their answers and probes attempted to clarify meaning. For example, Ms. Brown used the phrase 'school-ready' and I probed for clarification 'So what would you say the key things are with being 'school-ready'? I carried out eighteen interviews with thirteen participants (Appendix 5).

3.5.1.1 Interviews with educators

I interviewed four early years educators (two each from pre-school and nursery; Appendix 5). at their place of work in the quietest space available. There were still occasional interruptions as every room was multi-purpose. Interviews ranged from 10 to 25 minutes. One educator appeared nervous and tended to give short answers whereas some were relaxed, and one became very chatty and informal which led to ethical issues discussed in Section 3.5.1.3.

I interviewed one teacher in September 2018, however I was concerned about the ethical implications of only interviewing one member of teaching staff as anonymity could not be achieved. At a later date, I therefore interviewed two other members of the Reception teaching staff; these helped to mitigate the difficulty of one conspicuous source.

3.5.1.2 Interviews with parents

Five of the six parents were interviewed before their child began school in September (Appendix 5) and asked how they felt about the upcoming transition. The conversation was allowed to develop according to the topics parents felt were significant. It was not possible to arrange a meeting with Albert's mum who had a very young baby.

All six parents were interviewed at the end of the first half term when their children had been fulltime for three weeks (Appendix 5). I asked Albert's mum retrospective questions about the transition as well as questions now that he was fulltime. With the other five parents, I referred back to the first interview to see if their thoughts about what it would be like had been realised.

Most parents wanted to meet in their own homes and we agreed times to suit them. One parent asked to meet in the pre-school office instead of home and one interview was delayed because of family illness and took place at end of the school day in school. It was very short and did not have the same immediacy. Interviews ranged from 5 to 27 minutes; two of the shortest (Olivia's mum on 25.10.18 and Jim's mum on 1.11.18) had children who were ill. I offered to rearrange but they wanted to keep the appointments. In total I spent 4 hours and 32 minutes interviewing adults.

All interviews were recorded on a dictaphone with consent, and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were offered to adults to check. One participant took up the invitation; another asked me to remove their swearing. All field notes were recorded in a notebook and typed up immediately afterwards.

3.5.1.3 Ongoing ethical issues

As well as carrying out additional interviews to increase the anonymity of the teaching staff, the ethical issue of oversharing became challenging. My prior relationship with the pre-school staff meant it was easier to become informal. One educator went into some detail about a family that would be identifiable and I therefore omitted this in the transcript. She also came to see me after her interview to ask for her swearing to be removed as she was concerned it was unprofessional.

3.5.2 Observations

Observations within a naturalistic setting allow researchers first-hand experience of the individual within the context being studied (Patton, 2015; Spradley, 1980). Observation was chosen to study proximal processes within the school microsystem (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006; Tudge and Hogan, 2005) by examining the everyday in detail, including interactions between children and activities; with adults and peers; and with their physical surroundings (Table 2). Observation has been used in research about children's transitions (eg Brooker, 2002) and everyday bodily experiences (eg Horton and Kraftl, 2011). Observing children during everyday events in school, such as at carpet time, enabled insight into the entanglements between children, human and non-human entities in this new microsystem.

Observing and describing what it is happening in a given time and place is an integral part of 'listening' to children and forms one of the pieces in the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2001). Using observation in my daily practice meant that this method was familiar to me and was particularly valued as a way of 'slowing down', to create time to 'listen again or differently' (Cook and Hess, 2007, p.42). Given my tacit knowledge of the setting, I needed to disrupt and challenge assumptions around everyday events to better understand the experiences of children entering it for the first time.

Observations are an everyday occurrence in early years settings and the children, and adults, saw this as a 'normal' activity. The challenge was to make it clear that the observations were focused on the experience of starting school and not judging staff performance or assessing children's capabilities against curriculum goals. I was seen as an insider by the adults, as part of the teaching team; wearing nonteacher clothing (Section 3.2.1.1) helped to differentiate my researcher role. My presence inevitably impacted on the observation; within an interpretivist perspective this is not something to be eradicated, however, it does need to be made explicit as part of the research process. When observing service, for example, Cassandra saw me and smiled and waved; although no verbal interaction was made, she knew a familiar adult was there and this is likely to have impacted on the experience. The interactions can provide additional insights and data. For example, during the observation on lunch, Jim wanted to eat his pudding and asked an adult for permission. The adult asked me how much he had eaten before deciding. I was drawn into the interchange explicitly which was difficult in that I had to stop writing my notes. However, it also revealed the importance placed on adult surveillance of children's eating.

One of the challenges with observation is that researchers have to be 'inevitably selective' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.459). Decisions about which specific areas to observe were based on previous research findings such as carpet time (Kragh-Muller and Isbell, 2010) using the toilets (Tatlow-Golden et al., 2016) and the playground (Smith, 2010). As discussed in Section 3.3 I was also alert to 'critical moments' (Thomson et al., 2002) and one such 'critical moment' was Jim's experience of lunch which he found emotionally difficult. This offered the opportunity to examine the interactions between him, the adults and the materials around him, as well as his bodily movements and spoken comments. Being alert to these moments involved recording when children reacted to something, for example a sudden noise, or when they came to tell me something such as how they felt about the school uniform. 'Can I tell you something?' was a repeated conversation starter from the participating children both in the classroom and in the playground once I had established my role as 'finder outer'. Overall, I aimed to observe specific times and places, whilst also allowing moments to arise in the course of a session.

I carried out observations (31 hours and 35 minutes) in the early years settings and school (Table 3). A log of all observations can be found in Appendix 5.

Table 3 - Summary of Observations in early years settings and school

Observations in early years settings	Observations in school
<p>Session 1: before they had visited school Familiarisation: explained who I was, the purpose of visiting the setting. Shared child information sheet and when consent given, played alongside.</p> <p>Session 2: after they had visited school for the induction afternoon Shared a story as focal point to discuss how they felt about the induction afternoon in school.</p> <p>Session 3: just before the end of the summer term Timed observation for one hour of 'typical' activities. 'Typical' was defined by the members of staff as it being a day with usual routines, the usual children and staff attending and familiar activities.</p>	<p>Session 1: Induction afternoons</p> <p>Session 2: First time in school as a school child Narrative observation of carpet time</p> <p>Session 3: Second time in school as a school child Narrative observation of carpet time</p> <p>Session 4: First time in school as whole class; first time attending lunch Narrative observation of lunch</p> <p>Session 5: Second time in school as whole class; second time attending lunch</p> <p>Session 6: First full day in school</p> <p>Session 7: First time attending service Narrative observation of service</p> <p>Session 8: Spontaneous interactions following draw and talk activity</p>

3.5.2.1 Observations in early years settings

The familiarisation sessions involved me explaining the child information form and asking for their consent before interacting with the children either by playing alongside or being shown around. In the pre-school setting I played alongside making conversation related to the play whereas at nursery the children wanted to show me around the outside space and their favourite things to play with.

After children had attended their induction afternoons, I visited their settings. I shared a book, 'Going to school' (Civardi, 2005), as a way of structuring the conversation about how they had found induction. In nursery the children were interested in engaging with the story, however, in pre-school they were not. Instead, I played alongside them and when conversation turned to school I asked, 'What was it like when you went last week?'

To gain insight into typical activities and interactions before children began attending school, I carried out a timed observation for each child in their early years settings, every 10 minutes for an hour. I consulted staff to ensure the session would be 'typical' in terms of type of play, structure of session and people involved. I intended to position myself in more of an 'observer-as-participant' role (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 457), however flexibility was needed in terms of moving in and out of a participatory role. In pre-school, children ignored me, whereas in nursery the children initiated interaction; for example, Jim asked for paper and wanted to show his drawings and Cassandra took me by the hand to show how she could balance on logs.

3.5.2.2 Observations in school

To understand children's transition experiences and proximal processes, I focused my observations on 'Firsts' (Section 3.3): the first time in school during induction afternoon, their first as a school child, the first time all children attended, the first lunch, the first full day, and the first experience of service. For carpet time, lunch and service, I positioned myself away from the action with an 'Observer-as-participant' role although as discussed previously, there was always an element of participation.

Observations were recorded as written narratives without prompts or checklists, alongside key details (date, time, people involved, context and length of observation). In the classroom, I consciously focused on areas that my experience suggested were important in terms of the transition experience. These were when children first entered the classroom, carpet time, playtime, and when they needed to attend to self-care using the bathroom area. I participated as an adult who was available for support but did not participate in staff-led structured activities. In this role I could be flexible and open to moments where children initiated interactions.

In addition, I observed their second session in school and their second lunchtime in case I had missed anything. This was particularly important in terms of everyday practices and routines, for example, the order of actions expected during lunch. There was one unplanned observation session which occurred immediately after draw and talk. I was finishing my notes in the classroom and the children initiated a conversation by asking 'Can I tell you something?'

A research diary also documented my own emotions and reflections immediately afterwards. An excerpt from an observation transcript can be found at Appendix 6.

3.5.2.3 Ongoing Ethical Issues

Observations involved balancing participation and distance. Where moments of physical or emotional need arose, it was important to be flexible and move into a less detached role. I intended to observe lunchtime without interacting at all with the children. Jim's anxiety during this event created an ethical challenge; he addressed comments directly to me and I felt it right that I should respond. I attempted to balance this by asking how the food tasted; had I been in a teacher role I would have intervened much more pro-actively. It was difficult not to 'fix' the situation and I reflected in my research diary:

'It was difficult watching Jim eat his lunch for the first time because he was obviously upset and trying so hard to overcome it. I wanted to fix it, sit beside him and talk to him but tried to keep a distance. Just asked him what it tasted like so he knew I was there but not intervene as I would have in my teacher role. Still felt bad about it afterwards.' (Research Diary, 24/9/18)

Exiting the research process posed an ethical challenge. The 'disengagement process' (Snow, 1980, p.100; Patton, 2015) entailed not leaving the site but disengaging from my role as researcher. Ethically, I needed to signal that I was no longer collecting data. Children's requests to tell me something while in the playground persisted long after I explained that the research had finished and I was no longer writing things down. I explained I could listen in the role of their teacher but was no longer putting it into my 'big book'.

3.5.3 Draw and talk

This participatory method was chosen for children to communicate their experiences of starting school because of its effectiveness in researching children's perspectives (Einarsdottir et al., 2009; Dockett and Perry, 2005a; Kragh-Muller and Isbell, 2010; O'Rourke et al. 2017) (Table 2). Drawing and associated resources were familiar as children are encouraged to engage in drawing activities in early years settings and school, and often chose it as a fun activity during independent play. Although I did not assume all children felt positively about it, all six wanted to participate.

A key feature of draw and talk was its ability, by the way it was enacted, to unsettle power relations inherent in my dual role of teacher and researcher (Alderson, 2000; Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008). The difference between Session 1 and 2 discussed below highlighted this powerfully as I had to take further action to achieve greater disruption.

In the drawing task, children had more control over the agenda than would normally be the case in the classroom. Having asked participants to draw service, as I wanted to know more

about their perceptions of this specific event, I followed with a request to draw absolutely anything they wanted to share with me about school. Instead of choosing something in school, Olivia asked to draw her new puppies from home which were salient to her because of their absence:

they not 'llowed to go in school.

She felt able to control what she drew and therefore to express what was significant to her.

Draw and talk, and photo tours, allowed for conversation to flow at children's pace, and eye contact could be made or avoided which helped to reduce the intensity. It also avoided relying solely on verbal abilities, as Kragh-Muller and Isbell (2010) argue in their research investigating children's perspectives on childcare. Some children were keen to talk all the time they were drawing. There was one moment of silence, however, which lasted for 10 seconds when Albert chose to remain drawing after the rest of the group had gone.

In research using drawing, the emphasis is often on the process and conversation that occurs alongside it rather than the finished product (O'Rourke et al. 2017; Einarsdottir et al., 2009) – meaning drawing skill was less important and conversations, recorded and transcribed verbatim (See Section 3.7.1) were included in the analysis. For example, Cassandra's drawing of service started with dots representing the seats in a circular shape which mirrored the seats stacked against the walls of the hall. Later she decided to turn the dots into the outline of herself, then changed it again to represent her buddy. I listened and discussed this process with her (Appendix 7) – generating discussion about the stages of the drawing and other topics which arose as they drew. My role was therefore active engagement in understanding and co-creating the meaning. Elden (2012) highlights the importance of including co-construction of meaning between child and researcher explicitly in describing the research encounter; it is not capturing the 'unconscious voice' (p.77) of the child but rather the researcher is 'constructing the narrative' with the children.

I carried out the draw and talk sessions on two separate occasions, lasting 44 minutes in total (Appendix 5). In the first I asked children to draw something they liked or did not like about school and in the second session, asked them to draw a picture about service and a picture of anything they wanted to share with me about school.

3.5.3.1 Ongoing ethical issues

Session 1 of the draw and talk activity took place in the classroom whilst the rest of the class continued with their activities. Initially I thought this would help the activity seem familiar and relaxed, however there were several interruptions and high noise levels. Not only was I

drawn into supporting other children's behaviour, but the children also clearly viewed this as a non-negotiable 'teacher' activity (Einarsdottir et al., 2009), evidenced by comments such as 'Can I go and choose now? Can I go outside?' (Albert) 'I gone out the lines' (Zavier).

Gunson et al. (2016) discuss the importance of recognising how spaces, particularly adult structured spaces such as schools, can be constraining whereas smoother spaces can allow greater opportunities for children's agency. Their right to choose whether to participate (Lundy et al., 2011) seemed to be constrained within the 'striated' space of the classroom. In Session 2 I moved to a 'smoother' space away from the classroom, in a carpeted alcove off the main corridor (the library). I went through the child information sheet and made it clear they could say if they wanted to participate or not and that they could stop at any time; this resulted in greater engagement as Olivia asked a question about it (Section 3.2.1.1). I put the pencil-pots on the floor and gave the children large books to lean on while drawing. The contrast with the classroom helped to differentiate this as a research activity.

'In the space they stretched out and lay on their tummies to draw which was markedly different from the classroom' (Research diary, 15.10.18)

Session 2 lasted significantly longer (Appendix 5) and Albert, who had been so keen to leave in Session 1, chose to stay on for three more minutes even when the other two children left. He also chose to photograph this space as part of his photo tour:

Albert: Here. We sitted, you sitted there and me and Sean and Zavier um um drew the pictures.

(Takes photo.)

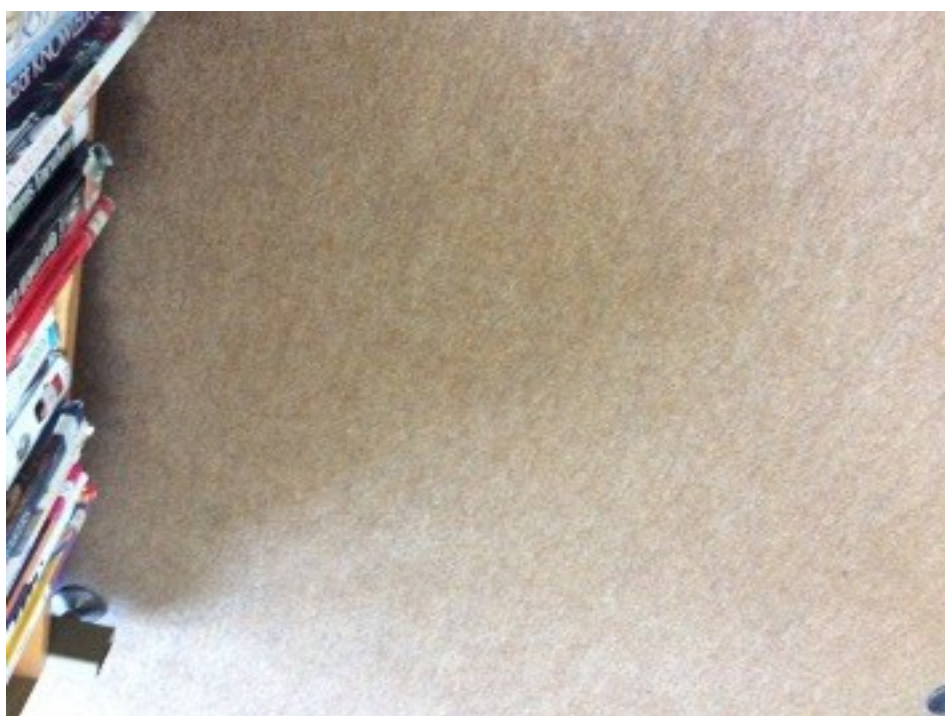


Figure 14 - Albert's photo of the carpeted alcove used for Draw and Talk session 2

The change of location facilitated a more ethical research activity by signalling that this was not a teacher led activity children were required to complete.

3.5.4 Photo tours

Photo tours offered an inclusive and motivating method for children to communicate their lived experience of transition in the classroom and beyond (Table 2). The decision to use photography was built on the theoretical understanding that it allows children to be 'experts in their own lives' (Langsted, 1994) as they have control over the iPad, the views that they want to capture and the explanations why these are important to them (Einarsdottir, 2005; Truong and Mahon, 2012).

We used iPads rather than digital or disposable cameras as the six children had experience with them within their early years settings and Reception. iPads also meant that images could be immediately checked and retaken if necessary during the tour. The children found using iPads enjoyable and engaging and this was borne out in the playful way that some engaged with the activity. Xavier, for example, found it funny to watch my feet through the iPad as we walked outside. It also highlighted that the iPad as an object carried with it a significance in terms of how it was perceived and used in this context; as Lipponen et al. (2016) argue, it was not a neutral object and impacted on the process. The children in this

study associated iPads with playing fun games and as a scarce resource. Having only three iPads in a class with 26 children meant it was difficult to access them so this may well have contributed to their enthusiasm for the activity.

Photo tours can be an effective way of creating time and space to listen to children differently, 'a tool to help understandings develop' (Cook and Hess, 2007, 43). For example, the photo of the hall floor in the initial study led to a new understanding of children's sensory experiences in school. Facilitating children to take control of the agenda created opportunities to gain insights into aspects that might be overlooked or ignored by adults (Singhal et al., 2007). Handing over the iPad and asking the children to choose the route round school and what to photograph helped to challenge the power relations that were inevitably present between us. These power dynamics could not be entirely overcome as 'visual practices are social practices' (Cooper, 2017, p.635) however they could be unsettled and made explicit. As the children were leading the tour I kept referring to the control they had, with questions such as 'Where would you like to go next?' 'Is there anything else you want to take photos of?' and 'It's up to you'.

Leading the tour established children as the experts and me as the guest. This differed considerably from research where participants were given cameras to use away from the researcher. Einarsdottir (2005) noted that children who were given disposable cameras to go off by themselves took more photographs of marginal spaces and out of bounds areas than when they were accompanied by a researcher. However, my presence in the moment meant I could clarify why they were taking certain photos and therefore why they felt it was significant. With very young children, photography offered an inclusive way for them to be able to express themselves that did not solely rely on verbal explanations. Interpretations of photos without any explanation would have been problematic as I would have been making assumptions about why the image had been taken.

As with the Starting School Project (Dockett and Perry, 2005a), the enthusiasm to wander freely about the school was motivating for the children, helping them to control the pace and direction of the conversations. It also enabled me to find out about the wider school environment as children chose to go outside, to the big playground, outside classroom, field, Forest school area and the adventure playground as well as inside, to the library (an alcove off the corridor), hall, corridor, cloakroom and classroom. Children's actions were less prescribed, the spaces were 'smoother,' allowing them greater control over what they chose to say or not say. On some occasions children chose not to answer my questions and simply moved away with their iPad to look at something else. Having the space and walking whilst talking was less intense than a face-to-face interview would have been (Langsted, 1994).

The five photo tours were carried out on the same school day (23.10.18) and lasted 53 minutes in total (Appendix 5). Children had been attending fulltime for three weeks prior to the tours; Table 4 summarises the process. As with draw and talk, the conversations that accompanied the photographs were recorded, with consent, and transcribed verbatim. An excerpt from a photo tour can be seen in Appendix 8.

Table 4 - Summary of Photo Tours

Session 1 9.10am-9.25am	Session 2 9.26am-11.06am	Session 3 1.30pm-2.20pm
Explained the purpose of the tour	Photo tours around school individually or in a pair using iPad	Reviewing photos with me and deciding which to keep or delete
Revisited child info sheet; inviting participation	Conversations recorded	
Decided on format of tour; individual or paired		
Technical practice with iPads		

3.5.4.1 Session 1 - preparation

Session 1 involved gathering the six children out of the classroom to revisit the child information sheet in relation to photo tours. I explained that I wanted them to use the iPads to take photographs because I wanted to know what they thought about school. When asked whether they wanted to join in and, if so, on their own or with a friend, the response was enthusiastic with children calling out 'by my own' or 'I want a friend'. Two wanted to be with a friend and four wanted to do it individually; there were therefore five tours in total. In this session I checked confidence with using the iPad for photography.

3.5.4.2 Session 2 – the tours

Session 2 took place immediately after Session 1. Each individual or pair went on a tour of the school with an iPad. I emphasised my role as researcher, or 'finder out' and wore my non-school clothing (Section 3.2.1.1). I explicitly told them they could go anywhere inside or outside that they wanted to show and talk to me about. Many objects they photographed related to unfamiliarity of these things and curiosity about their purpose. The medium of photography meant they could identify and ask about these objects more easily than in a draw and talk context.

All the children were adept at using the iPad to take photos, often tapping on the image they had taken to check it straight away. All chose different routes around school and took photos throughout; the amount ranged from 8 to 72 (Appendix 5). With the children's consent, our

conversations were recorded on a Dictaphone; this was crucial to understanding their reasons for choosing to photograph certain spaces, people or objects. I asked for clarification if I was unsure what they were photographing; it was crucial to have this discussion for me to fully understand the significance of these photos. For example, photos of the field area were taken for different reasons which were not clear in the image alone: Albert's focus was on the space it offered for football whilst Cassandra was recalling a time when she played on the climbing equipment with a friend. Not every photo was discussed, however, as the tour allowed the children greater freedom not to answer questions by moving onto another area or choosing to remain silent and concentrate on looking through the iPad. Overall, 113 of 122 photos were explained.

3.5.4.3 Session 3 – review of photos

To make sure the children were happy with data they had produced, and to increase the credibility of the research, they took turns after lunch looking through their photos as 'member checks' (Lincoln and Guba, 1986, p.19), a participatory validation process. All were motivated and engaged with swiping through their photos to decide what to keep or delete. Two children, Xavier and Olivia, chose not to delete any with Xavier saying 'I want to keep them all' whilst at the other end of the spectrum Sean chose to delete 37 and spent over 20 minutes engaged in the task. He chose to delete photos that were very blurred saying 'That's a rubbish one!' whilst both he and Jim deleted most of the duplicated images. Allowing time for these discussions was a crucial part of ensuring credibility (Lincoln and Guba, 1986; Truong and Mahon, 2012) even though the level of engagement from each child differed. Trustworthiness is discussed further in Section 3.6.

3.5.4.4 Ongoing ethical issues

My ethical responsibility extended beyond the participants in the study to include the other children in the class and wider school. One photo was deleted because it was of a child who had recently left the school and therefore could not give consent. Another photo was cropped so the names of current children could not be seen. I also listened and acted on comments from other children arising from my research activity. During the photo tours many other children from Reception class asked to participate; I therefore repeated the activity during my teaching day that week, so all children were given the opportunity to have their views listened to and to experience the freedom of being outside the classroom although this was not used as part of the research.

3.6 Trustworthiness

The purpose of this study is to understand and influence educational practice. To achieve this it is imperative that findings are viewed as trustworthy. Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified 'trustworthiness' as a more relevant approach to assessing qualitative research compared to reliability and validity; this section considers their criteria that create trustworthiness: credibility, dependability and confirmability, and transferability.

3.6.1 Credibility

Credibility is described as the extent to which findings are believable, from the perspective of participants. Having an 'insider' role was beneficial in the school context through 'prolonged engagement' and 'persistent observation' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p.192). Checking data directly with participants occurred during the data collection phase as I repeated back to participants what they said during interviews or conversations. Participants clarified or confirmed my understanding, for example, when interviewing Albert's mum I repeated back 'So there was a lot of information at the parents' meeting then?' to which she replied 'Yeah but it was good and it was helpful'. Offering transcripts to the adult participants to check, and planning time for children to make decisions about their photo data, all increased the credibility of the research process. Whilst it was important to use checks to ascertain if participants were happy with the data gathered at the point of collection, I chose not to go back to them during the initial analysis phase believing the researcher is interpreting and constructing themes rather than identifying a 'truth' hidden in the data that the participants can confirm or deny. Identifying a pre-existing 'truth' resonates with a more realist paradigm whereas my research acknowledges the interpretive and subjective nature of analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Practical and ethical considerations were also factors in the decision not to involve participants at this stage, particularly in my wish to avoid burdening young children with additional research engagement (Flewitt, 2005). Broad findings were shared informally once the analysis was complete and formal presentations to disseminate findings are planned within school once meetings can be held again.

3.6.2 Dependability and confirmability

In order for research to be dependable, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue for the need to clearly document the process in a logical way; closely linked to this is the idea of confirmability which is focused on demonstrating how conclusions have been drawn from the data.

Including enough detail about the research design, collection and analysis processes, the decisions made and justifications for these was key to securing the study's trustworthiness.

In addition to discussions in the main text, appendices support and further illustrate the process, allowing greater transparency. Reflexivity is essential with the researcher reflecting on, recognising and explaining their position and their decisions transparently and openly. My roles of early years educator, teacher and parent meant that I had experienced the transition to school from a variety of perspectives which inevitably influenced how I approached the research and what I was attuned to.

During the research I realised that the process of analysing data also worked in the other direction; as I increasingly saw the physicality of being in school in the children's data, I recognised that the impact on my own physicality as a teacher had played a part in why I had moved away from primary school teaching for some years. The relationship between myself and the data was ongoing and bi-directional; the research diary was crucial in capturing those insights.

Using multiple sources in the study was an important part of increasing my understanding of the start to school for children. Rather than viewing this as a form of triangulation (Yin, 2018), however, where one source may verify another, multiple sources and methods were used to shed light on the lived experience of children from different facets. For example, interviews with adults were not undertaken in order to verify that children's viewpoints were accurate, but to add another dimension of understanding in how adults' experiences entwined with children's. The metaphor of the crystal is therefore more potent than the triangle with its ability to 'reflect externalities and refract within themselves' creating multidimensional possibilities; multiple sources allows the researcher to explore more of these facets whilst always acknowledging that 'What we see depends on our angle of repose' (Richardson and Adams St. Pierre, 2018, p.822). 'Facet methodology' (Mason, 2011) therefore enhanced the trustworthiness of this research in terms of enabling a deeper understanding of multiple perspectives on children's lived experience as they started school.

3.6.3 Transferability

Generalisability in qualitative research needs to be considered differently from the definition used in quantitative research which often focuses on 'statistical-probabilistic generalisability' (Smith, 2018, p.138) from representational samples. It is more relevant in qualitative research to think of 'transferability' (Tracy, 2010; Smith, 2018). This resonates with the concept of 'naturalistic generalisability' (Stake, 1995; Smith, 2018) where the reader decides whether the research is transferable to their own situation. The research must provide enough detail about participants, contexts, analysis, and the process of reaching conclusions so that the reader may assess connections to their own circumstances and experiences. Certainly, when reporting broad findings to parents their response indicated a connection

and recognition of their own feelings and perspectives towards transition as an embodied experience.

To invite transferability the researcher needs to communicate the rich detail of their data in an accessible way; part of this relates to the transparency and authenticity of their reporting. For example, when communicating a summary of core findings to the school, I prepared specific examples from the data that helped to illustrate the embodied nature of children's experiences, a concept that contrasted completely with our usual discussions about pupil progress and cognitive development.

3.7 Data Analysis

In line with my underlying theoretical assumptions about knowledge as relational, I used 'reflexive thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2019) in which the researcher is positioned as central to the research process actively interpreting the data in order to examine patterns of meaning across the dataset. Rather than discovering a 'truth' hidden in the data, it emphasises the creative role of the researcher. Meaning is seen as constructed by the researcher, with all their past experiences, beliefs and knowledge, as they engage and interpret the data. As a result, the importance of articulating the researcher's position and decisions becomes essential to the quality of the research.

This section explains key decisions with reference to the stages of reflexive thematic analysis: Data familiarisation and writing familiarisation notes; Systematic data coding; Generating initial themes from coded and collated data; Developing and reviewing themes; Refining, defining and naming themes; Writing the report (Braun and Clarke, 2020). A key feature is the 'organic' and 'recursive' nature of the process with the researcher moving between the six stages as they become increasingly immersed in the data and the analysis (Braun et al., 2018).

The ongoing recursive nature of reflexive thematic analysis became apparent even into writing up where I made changes to the order in which to 'tell the story' of the sub theme *Multi-sensory bodies*. Although the different stages of analysis are often set out in a linear way, in reality I moved between coding and theme construction throughout the analysis process as I identified patterns of meaning that addressed the question:

'How do children experience the transition into school in the context of their families and educators?'

3.7.1 Transcription and familiarisation

I transcribed all audio recordings as part of a 'slowing down' process to immerse myself in the data (Hammersley, 2010, p.564). Whilst not a neutral replica of the interaction, the transcription allowed for a deeper and more transparent examination of the events (Braun and Clark, 2013). Typing out verbalisations forced a detailed examination of specific sounds, vocalisations or children's specific sentence constructions. Some paralinguistic features were captured such as laughing and sighing; however, the aim was not to produce a transcript with the level of paralinguistic detail required by conversation analysis. A notation system for orthographic transcription was used as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2013) to aim for clarity and consistency (Appendix 9).

All audio data were transcribed into written form prior to coding; files were encrypted and password protected. Transcripts and observations were uploaded to NVivo 11 (qsrinternational, 2015).

Another element of the familiarisation process was writing notes about aspects from the data that stood out, appeared to recur or were contradictory.

'Two events that I keep thinking about are service and lunch- there's so much going on in there about where children have to sit, what they have to remember to do and they seem such 'school' activities. You don't have to do this kind of thing at home or even in nursery.' (Research diary, 1/11/18)

In reflexive thematic analysis the researcher's interpretation is positioned as central to the process; these two events stood out for me partly because of my tacit knowledge from years working in schools where these events have often caused difficulties for children.

3.7.2 Coding

Coding in reflexive thematic analysis is organic and iterative. Codes are tools with which to analyse more deeply, and they change and evolve as the researcher becomes more deeply engaged with the data. I took an inductive approach, working through the data and attempting to code each piece of text that was relevant to the research question. This did not mean I was without knowledge of theories and experiences; knowledge from my literature review and experience from my teaching roles were an inevitable part of the analytic process. To make these assumptions as explicit as possible, I chose 'complete coding', assigning a code to 'anything and everything' related to the research question across the data set (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.206). This was particularly important given my role as insider; having to stop and generate a specific code forced me not to skim over the

seemingly obvious. For example, in the photo tours, there was conversation as we moved from one space to the other which could have been overlooked yet offered additional insight into how the children were experiencing school. As each transcript was coded, I recorded reasons why any text had been left uncoded; for instance, 'interactions with other family members unrelated to research question'; 'chit chat or small talk unrelated to research question'. NVivo was a useful tool here as parts that had been coded were clearly visible (Appendix 10).

Coding was iterative; Braun and Clarke (2013; 2018) refer to the continuum of semantic and latent codes and part of the challenge was trying to capture the meaning of each part of data and also going beyond the explicit surface meaning to a deeper understanding. Attempting to interpret 'latent' rather than 'semantic' meaning was particularly difficult with the adults' data where the surface meaning appeared so explicitly laid out. For example, adults spoke about school readiness openly and clearly and this was how I originally coded their responses, accepting their framing. I discuss the development of my understanding of adults' data further in Section 3.7.3 as I developed my themes. Using different types of coding helped the process of looking for underlying meanings in the children's data; 'Process coding' (Saldana, 2016) enabled insight into the different ways children were moving whilst 'InVivo coding' (Saldana, 2016) foregrounded specific phrases used by participants such as '*I don't know what we do with this*'. Appendix 11 provides examples of Process and InVivo coding.

After each data item was coded, I recorded in my reflective diary why the node was used, uncertainties with codes chosen or reasons for changing or redefining them. Data which have been difficult to code was recorded here as well in order to allow time for reflection with the aim of providing deeper insights.

'Some of my codes are so specific that I am not yet sure how they will be grouped together. Xavier has 'Just that boring thing' referring to a part of the wall and 'I don't know what we do with it' referring to the compass on the playground. Maybe there's something about how new everything seems to him as he's going round school and trying to work out what you do with everything?' (Research diary, 5/1/2019)

Recording these thoughts was a crucial part of making conscious and transparent decisions. Although initially unsure about these seemingly isolated codes, the iterative process of reading literature and returning to the data set led me to gain a deeper understanding; in this case reading about materialities allowed me to interpret these codes as relating to the entanglement of children with objects that were unfamiliar to them.

3.7.3 Themes

3.7.3.1 Generating initial themes from coded and collated data

NVivo was a useful tool for organising the data. Whilst enabling me to explore the data in detail, however, it was limited in its ability to provide the overview I needed. The importance of both closeness to and distance from the data is discussed by Richards (1998, p.324) who argues for researchers to achieve 'zooming in' as well as a 'wide angled view'. To create distance and an overview, I used physical materials, post-its stuck to the wall. Seeing the codes written onto post-its, grouping them together and trying different clusters was a helpful part of the process.

Consistent with the concept of the researcher as an active and subjective constructor of themes, I grouped codes together to form 'coherent clusters of meaning' (Braun et al., 2018, p.12). I returned to the original data frequently to check my clustering made sense, aiming for a 'central organising concept' (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.224) for candidate themes (Appendix 12). I noted each node in relation to every individual participant so that I had a full map of who had said what and how this contributed to each theme (Appendices 13, 14 and 15). Achieving clarity around the core idea for each theme involved a recursive process of grouping, returning to the data and reflecting on whether the theme did involve an 'essence' (Braun and Clarke, 2019, p.8). For example, the idea of a multi-sensory body experiencing transition came early on. However, after reading about materialities and further engagement with the data, codes that had previously not made sense could be interpreted as *Bodies encountering objects*. Within a subtheme it was sometimes necessary to label a cluster of nodes that had been grouped together in order to clarify the central concept, for example, within *Bodies encountering objects* I labelled nodes as 'Objects carry meaning'; 'Objects to decipher'; 'Unknown objects- religious' and 'Objects that disempower'.

The significance of particular codes was not reliant on frequency alone; a feature of reflexive thematic analysis is emphasis on how well codes tell a relevant and important story about the research question, rather than reliance on measuring quantities of data represented by a code (Braun and Clarke, 2019), so while recurrences across the data set were of interest, so too was the intensity of a code. Intensity was defined as a 'critical moment' (Thomson et al., 2002; Payler, et al., 2016; see Section 3.3), a telling moment that impacted on the child; for example, moments that caused an emotional reaction, such as eating lunch. Strong emotional responses were interpreted as significant, giving insight into how children experienced the transition to school and thus and relevant to the research question. Candidate themes were discussed and refined with supervisors to gain a deeper understanding of the boundaries of that theme through collaborative discussion.

3.7.3.2 Developing and reviewing themes

I constructed themes for each group of participants. For the adults, I constructed three themes: *View of school readiness*; *Experiencing transition emotionally*; and *Interactions between settings* (Appendices 13 and 14). Adults framed the transition around the concept of school readiness, the extent of children's readiness, their views on what being ready meant, and how readiness was being achieved. Adults also discussed how they felt about the transition process as well as events and experiences between themselves and other settings. Parents talked mainly about home-school relations; early years educators about their relationships with both home and school; school talked about the roles of early years settings and home.

I initially constructed four themes for the children's data: *Bodies in transition*; *Boundaries*; *Emotion (verbal)* and *Relationships* (Appendix 15). Reviewing these themes alongside previous research highlighted that my findings in two, *Boundaries* and *Relationships*, resonated with previous key studies, whereas *Bodies in transition* shed light on a previously less well researched area. *Boundaries*, for example, highlighted the importance of rules about the places children were and were not allowed to go in school, such as where they could play at playtime as well as moments where boundaries between home and school had been mentioned by children. Learning the specifics of school rules is a key finding from previous research into children's perspectives (Dockett and Perry, 2004; Einarsdottir, 2003) as are the importance of family connections (O'Rourke et al., 2017; O'Farrelly et al., 2019).

Relationships highlighted the importance of friendships for children, an area which has already been researched extensively in relation to peers (Dockett and Perry, 2004; Einarsdottir, 2011; Eskela-Haapanen et al., 2017; O'Rourke et al., 2017; O'Farrelly et al., 2019) and the positive impact of having older children to support transition in a buddy system (Dockett and Perry, 2005b). In reviewing the themes, I also realised that verbalised emotions was more of a domain summary gathering together all the codes where children had simply stated '*I like it*' in relation to an activity or object; this meant the theme was descriptive and not analytic.

A pivotal stage in the analysis was the decision to focus on one theme, *Bodies in transition*, to sharpen and deepen the contribution of this study. The decision was informed by engagement with existing literature on the transition to school, my practice experience, reviewing the data, and the inevitable constraints of the EdD format. My professional experience over 24 years of working with children either side of the transition (see Chapter 1) had alerted me to physical challenges with starting school such as sitting still, toileting independently and managing bodily impulses which were often mentioned by parents and

educators as necessary requisites for school readiness, yet which often appeared to hamper the settling-in process.

Engaging with the literature on transition, studies on everyday physical experiences such as toileting (Harrison and Murray, 2014; Tatlow-Golden et al., 2016; O'Farrelly et al., 2019) validated this tacit knowledge as worth exploring further. The physicality of starting school seemed largely to be reported peripherally rather than as a central theme (e.g. Dockett and Perry, 2004; Margetts, 2013). The process of interpreting the data, combined with the realisation that the physicality of being in school was not represented extensively in the literature (Section 2.5.4) led me to focus exclusively on this theme with its four subthemes, *Multisensory bodies*; *Bodies encountering objects*; *Bodies becoming 'schooled'*; and *Bodies reacting*.

3.7.3.3 Refining, defining and naming themes

The overarching research question '*How do children experience the transition into school in the context of their families and educators?*' foregrounds children's experiences in the transition process whilst recognising that this occurs within an ecological network. Having made the decision to lead with the children's theme of *Bodies in transition*, the adult codes and data were then viewed once more through this lens of children's embodiment. This increased my awareness that adults' thoughts about what children should be able to do, and their own role in the transition process, related to preparing children's bodies for school. As a result, I merged two subthemes in the Educators' data that were originally in the *View of school readiness* theme. '*Ready or not*' and '*Own role in readying children for school*' were merged into '*Educators preparing children's bodies for school*'.

Codes in the adult data were also revisited and those which related to the embodiment theme were highlighted (Appendices 11 and 12). As I worked through the embodiment theme revisiting the original data, I was able to interpret it in more depth, differentiating between those aspects that related to the embodied experience and recognising where some codes were still 'domain summaries' rather than interpretations of latent meanings. 'Homework' for example originally included everything that participants had said about homework. However, in this iteration I split the code into 'Family adaptations for homework'; 'Proximity at home: homework stewards' and 'Understanding homework requirements'. The recursive nature of reflexive coding was crucial in terms of reaching a more nuanced analysis.

The final step of analysis consisted of an integration of the coding from the different informant groups in this study. Codes from the adult data were fully reviewed to consider

how they related to the embodiment lens. Where relevant, these were interwoven with the children's data to create a final, multi-perspectival view on the *Bodies in transition* theme. The essence of the finding, which the next chapter examines, is that there is a physicality to the transition process from the perspective of both children and adults involved. The four subthemes created, *Multisensory bodies*; *Bodies encountering objects*; *Bodies becoming 'schooled'*; and *Bodies reacting*, represent different elements of this, they are 'multifaceted crystals' (Braun and Clarke, 2019, p.8) that shine different lights on this embodied experience.

3.8 Chapter summary

This chapter has explained how the research sits within an interpretivist paradigm viewing knowledge as relational where the research process is one of co-construction with the participants. My underlying assumptions of children as rights holders informed the need to select approaches and methods that enabled effective listening to young children: participatory and multiple methods. The case study approach enabled a deep exploration of a single transition event for six children beginning school in a Reception class: for each child the inclusion of a parent, one of their early years educators and the teaching staff in school reflected a bioecological approach (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006).

To make the data collection and analysis as transparent as possible, the use of interviews, observations, draw and talk and photo tours have been explained as has the process of 'reflexive thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2019) for coding data and constructing themes whilst recognising the central role of the researcher in this process. The decision to focus on the theme of embodiment is documented to explain how and why this shift was needed; finally, data from all participant groups were reviewed and integrated to examine the core idea of the physicality of children's transition process. This embodied experience is addressed in the following chapter in four subthemes: *Multisensory bodies*; *Bodies encountering objects*; *Bodies becoming 'schooled'*; and *Bodies reacting*.

Chapter 4 Findings: Bodies in Transition

This chapter presents the findings, *Bodies in transition*, in four subthemes, *Multisensory bodies*; *Bodies encountering objects*; *Bodies becoming 'schooled'*; and *Bodies reacting*. Sections 4.1 and 4.2 focus on children's proximal processes in relation to non-human matter in the new microsystem of school. *Multi-sensory bodies* details the sensory entanglements children experienced as they first encountered the material world of the classroom and school environment (Hultman and Lenz Taguchi, 2010). The material world was salient to children's lived experience; *Bodies encountering objects* illuminates how assemblages of children and non-human matter shaped their first few weeks at school (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Objects carried meaning, sometimes helping them to decipher the new culture they had entered, but sometimes disempowering.

Section 4.3 examines the third subtheme, *Bodies becoming 'schooled'*: the physical demands made of children's bodies so they could demonstrate they had become a school child. Creating a 'docile' or 'schooled' body (Foucault, 1977; Dixon, 2011) involved learning to sit still in the correct position, how and when to speak or be silent, and how to regulate bodily functions to the correct times of the day. The embodiment lens was applied to examine adults' focus on 'school readiness' as what it meant to be ready or unready related directly to the bodily requirements of school. There were two main elements: self-care and conforming to the bodily requirements associated with the classroom (Bernstein, 2000). Early years educators and parents prepared children to perform these skills and school reinforced them during transition with the aim of creating children who were ready to receive the learning as effectively as possible.

Section 4.4 explores the final subtheme, children's *Bodies reacting* to the experience of starting school. Data for children focuses on emotions fleetingly evident through body posture, movement or eruptions of laughter. Much was communicated through observing and interpreting children's physical movements as well as paying attention to the impact of their responses on myself. Adults' descriptions of children's embodied experiences included hunger and fatigue as key bodily reactions experienced by children in these first few weeks of school.

For each subtheme, the number of comments coded for adults and for children was counted to gain a sense of the emphasis placed on different elements of the transition to school by the different participant groups. A visual representation of the proportion of comments made by adults and children illustrated the difference in emphasis for the two groups (Figure 15). The everyday sensory experiences which were so vivid for children as they entered this new

and unfamiliar space, were experienced differently by adults. Adults were already familiar with the sounds and smells of school and the difference in physical positioning meant that the experience of textures differed; adults did not sit on the carpet of the classroom or the floors of the hall; they did not eat lunch at the tables with children and they did not share the bathroom space. The material experiences of the children therefore differed almost completely from the adults. Adults made only two references to children's multi-sensory experiences and made no comments at all about children encountering objects. Notably, the emphasis for adults was on readying children's bodies for school and managing the embodied reactions of children to the physical demands placed on them.

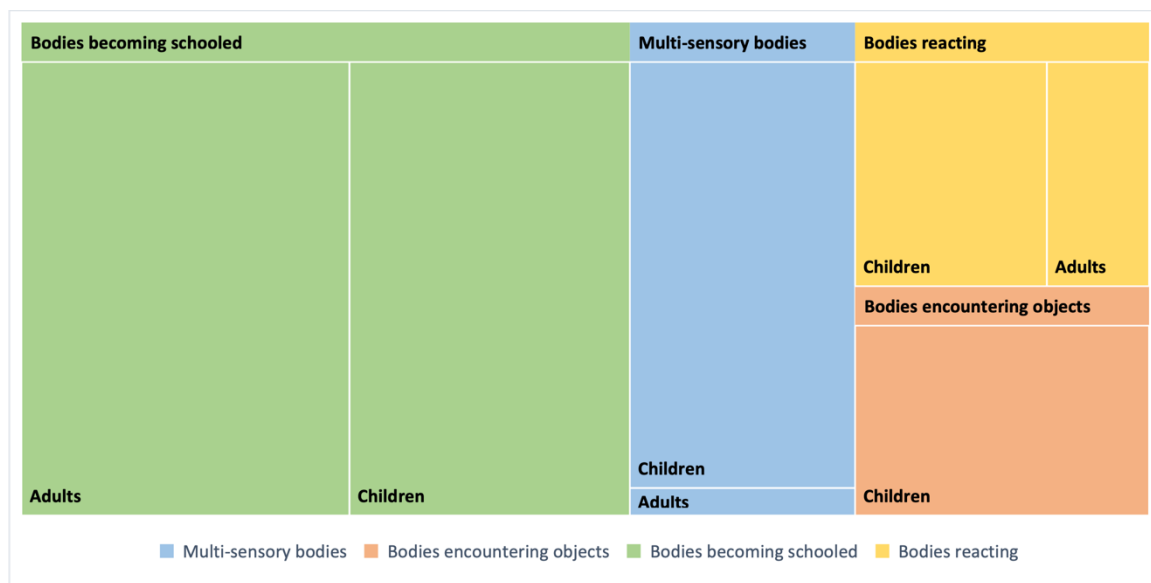


Figure 15 - Visualisation of the proportion of comments made by adults and children on each theme

Table 5 maps out each of the four subthemes within *Bodies in transition* and for each one, details clusters of codes identified. The coloured initials indicate which participant the code relates to.

Table 5 - Theme: Bodies in transition with data from children, parents and educators

Key to participant codes in Table 6				
Parents in purple	Early years educators in light blue		Teaching staff in green	Children in red
Albert's Mum (A)	<i>Pre-school</i>	<i>Nursery</i>	<i>School</i>	Albert (A)
Cassandra's Mum (C)	Emma (E)	Tess (T)	Ms Brown (MsB)	Cassandra (C)
Jim's Mum (J)	Jill (J)	Karen (K)	Ms White (MsW)	Jim (J)
Olivia's Mum (O)			Ms Grey (MsG)	Olivia (O)
Sean's Mum (S)				Sean (S)
Zavier's Mum (Z)				Zavier (Z)

Sub theme:	Multisensory bodies	Bodies encountering objects	Bodies becoming 'schooled'	Bodies reacting
Nodes:	Touch (whole body) I'm here now C Chapped lips A Feeling cold S C O J Clothing C S A J Floor A O J S C Seeking touch Seeking physical contact O C J	Objects carry meaning Chairs A O Z J Objects to decipher 'What are these things?' Z A C Unknown objects- religious A Z C J O Objects that disempower Bathroom Z C O S Lunchtime Z C J	Sitting and stillness C A Z O J S Bodies eating lunch C Z O J Buddies correcting/modelling body position Z C J Restriction of voice Controlling voice/language A O C Z S J Non-verbal communication Z C O A	Anxious/unsure C J S A O Laughter Z O C S J Fatigue C Z O J S Tiredness S A C Z Hunger A C Z J

Sub theme:	Multisensory bodies	Bodies encountering objects	Bodies becoming 'schooled'	Bodies reacting
	<p>Sensory experience of food/eating</p> <p>Liking lunchtime food O S A C Z J</p> <p>Newness of lunchtime food J C</p> <p>Smell</p> <p>Responding to smell C O</p> <p>Sound</p> <p>Dislike of noise O J S C J</p>	<p>Classroom Z</p>	<p>Moving freely</p> <p>Running O Z A S J</p> <p>Throwing Z</p> <p>Leaping C</p> <p>Climbing C</p> <p>Unrestricted voice</p> <p>Roaring A S</p> <p>Calling Z A S J</p> <p>Timing physical needs</p> <p>Toileting A C</p> <p>Hunger O C</p> <p>Parents preparing children's bodies for school</p> <p>Concerns sitting still Z S</p> <p>Pencil grip Z S</p> <p>Own pace vs 'he's got to do these things' C Z</p> <p>Eating lunch 'fussy' 'unfussy' J S C</p> <p>Developing self-care: Toileting and clothing C Z</p> <p>Communication C O</p> <p>Parents' bodies becoming schooled</p> <p>Proximity: in school A J E T MsG</p>	

Sub theme:	Multisensory bodies	Bodies encountering objects	Bodies becoming 'schooled'	Bodies reacting
			<p>Proximity at home: homework stewards A O Z J</p> <p>Educators preparing children's bodies for school (EYE)</p> <p>Working with parents at transition E T</p> <p>Independent self-care: Toileting T E K J including Age T</p> <p>Independent self-care: Clothing K</p> <p>Follow routines T</p> <p>Sitting still E J including Age J</p> <p>Communication/feedback between early years settings and school J</p> <p>(TS)</p> <p>Independent self-care: Toileting and clothing MsW MsG MsB</p> <p>Follow routines MsW MsG MsB</p> <p>Concentrate MsB</p> <p>Familiarity with environment MsB</p> <p>Emotional support MsW</p> <p>Building relationships and training children during staggered entry MsG MsW MsB</p>	

4.1 Multi-sensory bodies

I was in pre-school. Now I'm here! (C/Obs/10.9.18)

Starting school involved the spatial transition of self: individual bodies inhabiting a new space. Cassandra demonstrated an awareness that she was now physically present in a new space when she called out the above statement during her first carpet time.

As embodied subjects entering a new environment, children experienced a range of multi-sensory 'entanglements' or 'intra-actions' (Hultman and Lenz Taguchi, 2010) in these first few weeks. Small, everyday interactions with sounds, smells and textures created insight into the proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) that children experienced as they transitioned into this new environment. Whilst some experiences were present for all in the environment, such as the soundscape of bells, their unfamiliarity to children meant they were experienced differently than by adults.

The sense most frequently coded was touch (Appendix 16). The most intensely emotional event for one child (and myself) was the experience of eating during the first lunchtime meal. Sound and smell were less frequently referred to but featured in the experience of two children. Sight was all pervading yet invisible – taken for granted, it was not referred to explicitly by anyone during data collection and is not therefore included as a separate sense here. It did pervade every experience however and was central to the photo tours which relied on children taking images of what they felt was significant that I should see. As multisensory as their experiences were, I have chosen to focus on four senses separately, to explore each in more depth and to note the specifics involved in each. I will firstly explore sound before turning to the frequently mentioned sense of touch, the fleeting references to smells and concluding with the intense experience of taste and eating lunch.

4.1.1 Sound: children, bells and hand-dryers

A dislike of noise was evident for some children for example during the first session which all 26 children attended. Olivia came to find me at playtime to tell me '*It's too many children today. It's too noisy!*' (Obs/24.9.18). Jim said it was too noisy when eating in the hall (Obs/24.9.18). Sean also put his hands over his ears when shown the hand-dryer in the bathroom area. He stated '*I don't like it*' although he did still use it when it was his turn to do so (Obs/10.9.18). Sound was one sensory experience that was also referred to in the adult data (Appendices 11 and 12). Jill, the pre-school key person of Olivia and Albert, spoke about her awareness of children's concerns about sound, how they were initially '*terrified of the hand-dryer*' and how having the pre-school on site meant that she could now take them to the school bathroom to get them used to it.

They're not now because every time we go we put the hand-dryer on. (Int/19.7.18)

She described how these kinds of experiences worried the children in her care and her awareness had caused her to alter her practice to support them.

It's a weird thing but it is things like that that freak 'em out (.) toilets, hand-dryers rather than anything else in the classroom. (Int/19.7.18)

The noise created by the presence of more children and the noise of the hand-dryer were not the only auditory experiences particular to this new space. Part of their first few weeks at school was about practising how to respond to the sounds of the school and class bells. The ringing of bells was a new sound for the children both within the classroom, and school wide. These bells punctuated the school day, marking different times and signifying that an action was required. The day was split into chunks of time with teachers framing (Bernstein, 2000) when an activity should stop, by ringing hand bells. These classroom bells meant children should empty their hands, stand still, wriggle their fingers and look at the adult who was shaking the bells. The classroom bells were to gain the children's attention so that a particular instruction could be given or to indicate it was time to gather on the carpet. The school bell generally meant they needed to stand still and look towards an adult, however, the fire bell meant they needed to follow the teacher into the playground and make a line. The school bell rung via a school wide system was intended to keep staff and children to time with specific activities such as the start and end of the day, playtime and lunchtime as well as acting as a signal in case of an emergency. Achieving a 'single, obligatory response' (Foucault, 1977, p.166) was one of the key goals in these first few weeks of transition and children were closely observed to ensure they complied.

The bells used in the classroom were visible and the sound fairly gentle, but the bells that rung throughout the school were invisible, sudden and loud. Some of the children reacted negatively to this sound such as Cassandra who winced and Olivia who put her hands over her ears when the bell rang for the start of playtime (Obs/ 25.9.18). Olivia was particularly impacted by noise, for example when the whistle was blown for the fire drill she put her hands over her ears and looked alarmed (Obs/ 25.9.18). As novices to this system, they were not yet 'trained' in the action which was required to be performed on hearing the signal (Foucault, 1977).

Sounds permeated the school day and impacted children's experiences; they had to learn the meanings of certain sounds and what the corresponding actions were as well as learning to tolerate noise related to the hand-dryer and larger numbers of children. The sensory

experience of sound was acknowledged as a challenge when Jill referred to the hand-dryer; bells were mentioned by another early years educator.

they hear a bell they know they've got to line up haven't they in their certain lines
(T/Int/ 30.7.18).

The focus was on teaching the children what to do when they heard the bells, rather than on the experience for the child.

4.1.2 Touch: Entanglements with the material world

Touch is part of the haptic system (See Section 2.3.1.2); two key elements are the way that the whole body and not just the hands and fingers experience the environment as well as the body's awareness of its presence in the world. The children referred to their own bodies and the sensations they were experiencing such as discomfort caused by chapped lips, their temperature and the feel of the school uniform.

Albert shared the discomfort he was feeling in his body during a photo tour, telling me about his chapped lips.

Albert: ... I got dry lips.

Researcher: You got dry lips have you? (high pitched) Oh dear. (23.10.18)

Chapped lips, something which many children experience as they navigate between warm classrooms and cold playtimes, highlighted the awareness of their bodies in this new space.

4.1.2.1 Temperature

Children also referred to the temperature of their bodies. As we were outside for some of the time during the photo tours, feeling cold was discussed such as when Olivia said '*It's cold out here*' (23.10.18), Sean asked to collect his coat and Cassandra ruminated on how he could be cold when she was not.

Researcher: You're warm enough are you?

Cassandra: Warm enough. (Then loudly) I don't know why Sean's cold? It's got the whole jumper all over him.

Researcher: He's got shorts on! Hasn't he

Cassandra: Yeah but I don't know why he's cold because he's got the whole jumper over him. I don't know why I'm not cold because I only got just a cardigan on me.

Researcher: But you're not cold?

Cassandra: Yeah!

Researcher: Ok.

Cassandra: That's a little bit funny! That's strange! (23.10.18)

Cassandra was very interested in this difference of experience and tried to make sense of it for herself during this exchange; being in the position of researcher with only two children to 'listen' to allowed me to explore these micro-moments which in a fast paced, busy classroom as a practitioner would be much harder to achieve.

4.1.2.2 The touch of uniform on the body

As part of the experience of the new microsystem of school, children were required to wear a specific and formal uniform. Unlike the nursery and pre-school experience where they wore their own clothes, school set out clear instructions about what was to be worn. The school setting demonstrated a strong classification (Bernstein, 2000) in terms of the strength of boundaries between home and school, uniform being one way that this was achieved. One embodied experience for the children therefore was transitioning from the weakly classified clothing requirements of their early years setting to the strongly classified experience in school. At the proximal processes level this meant that children experienced the 'intra-action' (Lenz Taguchi, 2010) between clothing and their bodies every day they attended school; for some this was experienced positively whilst others found it constraining and even painful. However it was experienced, the uniform was not neutral; it acted on the body in an entanglement that involved the clothing, the child's body and wider policies at the exosystem level that meant that this particular clothing had to be worn.

In this school, the uniform involved wearing a buttoned white shirt with collar, a tie, a school jumper with the school logo on it, grey school trousers or skirt, grey socks and black shoes (not trainers). Clothing worn at nursery/ pre-school contrasted with the uniform requirements of school. When coding the transcripts, I was struck by the extremes of this contrast. During one visit to nursery, I arrived to find a 'Water extravaganza' where all the children were wearing swimming costumes and were engaged in throwing water at the adults. The adults were also throwing water at the children. Although at the time I thought of this as problematic as it meant I was not able to start my conversation with Jim, it caused me to reflect on the freedom this clothing offered and the movement it allowed when compared with uniform.

Jim was engrossed in a water extravaganza when I arrived. He was shrieking with laughter as he threw cups and buckets of water over Tess and she hosed him with a garden hose. (Obs/28.6.18)

The activity itself would also not have been allowed in school, or indeed at home for some children, it had an element of boundary breaking, of blurring the insulation between the 'category relations' of educator and child (Bernstein, 2000, p.99) both in terms of the way that hoses and water were being used and who was allowed to throw water over whom.

The first response to the new clothing for school came from Cassandra during the first session in school wearing uniform.

'Something's hurting me!' She pulls at her collar. I ask 'What is it?' 'This thing, it's tight.' She walks off to the painting easel. (Obs/ 10.9.18)

As well as strong classification, there was also strong framing with rules and expectations explicitly set out and enforced. There were rules about how the uniform must be worn and this was reinforced at times when children were gathering as a whole school such as for service. Tucking shirts into trousers was particularly focused on, which was challenging for some children.

Ms. White: Ties on nice and straight, shirts tucked into your trousers. Tuck your shirts in, we don't want any shirts showing.

She looks at Albert who has his shirt untucked.

Ms. White: Let me look at you Albert. You put your hands at the side and you push it in.

Albert: I can't do my back bit.

He tries to tuck the shirt into his trousers. Ms. White helps him tuck it in. The class is tucking shirts and moving ties. (Obs/ 8.10.18)

At the end of service Sean showed his awareness of the importance of a tucked in shirt as I observed him watching the head teacher and attempting to tuck his shirt back in.

The feel of the uniform and the impact on the body became even clearer when Cassandra returned to the topic a month after her initial comments on uniform, when I was in the classroom after carrying out a draw and talk session. I was in my 'finding out' clothes and Cassandra came over and announced, *'This thing is stranglin' me.'* I asked *'What, your tie?'* She pulled at it and said, *'It hurts my neck.'* (Obs/15.10.18). Hultman and Lenz Taguchi (2010) assert the importance of non-human interactions suggesting that they are of equal influence in 'children's becomings' (p.525). The feel of the tie was a negative one for Cassandra, and not one which would smooth her way into school and allow her to focus on

playing and learning. Once Cassandra was heard talking to me about her tie, other children joined in the conversation.

Other children approach and start to talk about their ties. 'I don't like it, it hurts me here' says Jim and points to the back of his neck.' 'When I'm big I can have one like my buddy' says Sean 'I reply 'What sort is that?' He says 'You can't pull it down.' Albert says 'Yeah that's good.' I ask 'What do you think about the rest of your school clothes?' Albert says 'I like my shirt 'cos it looks like England.' Cassandra says 'I like my other clothes 'cos I can choose what I want to wear'. They move off to play. (Obs/ 15.10.18)

There was a mixed response to the uniform with Albert enjoying the look of the shirt as it reminded him of English footballers whilst Cassandra and Sean focused on the discomfort of the tie. Sean brought a new element to the conversation when he talked of the future where he could wear a full tie rather than one on elastic. Cassandra also articulated the lack of choice with uniform by contrasting it with her 'other clothes' which she liked because she was allowed to choose what to wear. The transition to school for her meant an adjustment to losing control of the clothing she wore on her own body, clothing that hurt her neck.

Interestingly, during her photo tour, she chose to photograph her own coat which was not governed to the same extent by uniform rules:

Cassandra: I like my coat.

.....

Cassandra: Where is my coat?

*Researcher: Where **is** your coat Cassandra? Good question. What do you want? A picture of your actual coat? Alright you got it? (23.10.18)*

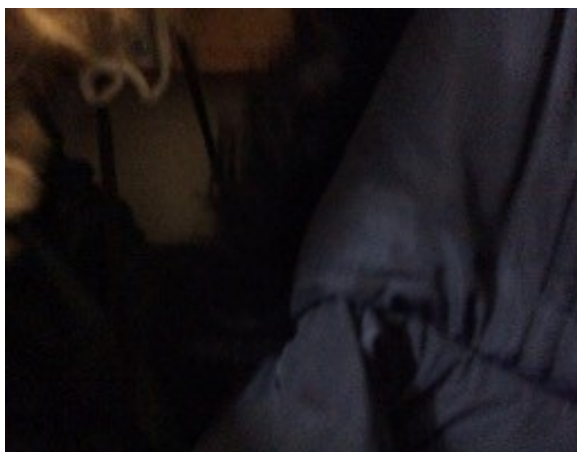


Figure 16 - Cassandra's picture of her coat

Agency was relational, distributed between the child's bodies and the non-human materiality of the clothing (Barad, 2007). As a result, Cassandra's agency was constrained by the intra-action between her body and the clothing required by school. This small detail of the everyday, the taken for granted, speaks to a wider issue about processes within school which are seen as unimportant or insignificant but which for some children cause discomfort.

4.1.2.3 The touch of the floor on the body

The children sat on the floor of the hall for service in rows and cross-legged whilst the adults sat on plastic chairs around the edge of the hall. Service was a strongly classified event (Bernstein, 2000) and the hall a highly striated space (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) with prescribed actions for individuals to adhere to including where and how children needed to sit. I return to the key event of service in Section 4.3.3 examining how bodies are schooled in this context. During the photo tours, the children expressed a mixed response to the feel of the floor on their skin. Some spoke about it positively with Albert saying it was '*Comfy*' and Olivia '*Good*' (23.10.18). Others were not so positive with Jim and Sean describing the floor as cold and Cassandra focusing on its stickiness.

Researcher: And where do you sit for service?

Sean: On the floor.

Researcher: On the floor. What's that like?

Sean: Uh (.) is cold! It's very cold on your legs

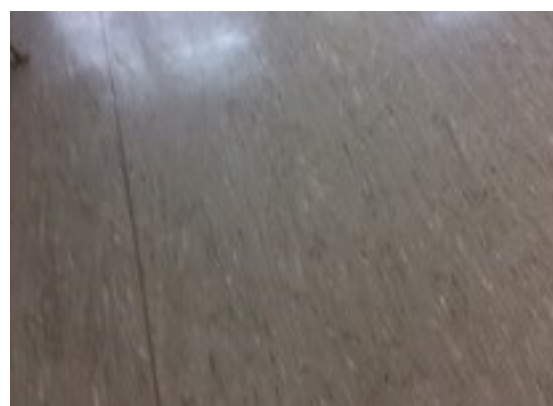
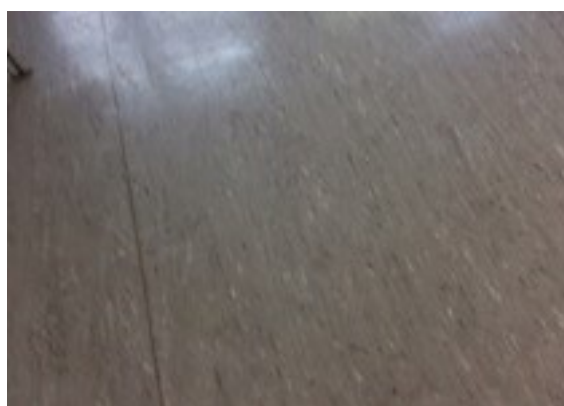


Figure 17 - Sean's photos of the hall floor

Cassandra: Uh is very sticky!

Researcher: Sticky? ((laughs))

Cassandra: Sticks on our knees. (23.10.18)

The 'intra-action' between the floor and the skin of the children's legs and knees caused them to experience the temperature and texture; the floor was not a neutral object, it cooled them down and put stickiness onto them. The differing of experiences between adults and children was clearly evident during service conveying the unequal expectations of children and adults and reinforcing the message of compliance. While adults could choose their sitting experience, children had no choice over where or how they sat even if this meant getting cold or sticky. Bordonaro (2012, p.423) suggests that as education is considered to be a 'proper' activity for children, constraining their agency is often overlooked; paying attention to the experiences of these children helped to highlight the inequalities and lack of choice offered throughout their day. The haptic experience of this space was fundamentally different and unequal for children and adults.

4.1.2.4 Children seeking touch

Seeking out touch was also evident as a source of comfort and connection for Olivia and Cassandra. I observed Olivia seeking out the physical touch of adults to comfort her. For example, when parting from her mother at the start of the day, she held her mum's hand and rested her head on her shoulder until I invited her to draw, when she transferred her hand to mine.

Olivia came in with her mum and kept hold of her hand. Mum crouched down and Olivia lay her head on her shoulder, fingers in mouth. An adult encouraged her put her books away. 'Come on, Olivia, say bye to mum and put your things away.' Olivia kept her head on her mum. I went over and explained that we were digging for fossils today. She looked at me. I asked if she would like to do a drawing for her mum and she said she would. She held my hand and walked with me to the drawing table. Mum left. (Obs/25.9.18)

It was also Olivia who sought physical contact during circle time, only entering the circle when she could sit by an adult, choosing to lean on them and place her hand on their leg.

Olivia stands outside the circle with her head on one side and her fingers to her mouth. An adult directs her to a space. Olivia shakes her head. The adult sits in the space and beckons for her to sit next to her. Olivia sits down and leans on the adult. She puts her hand on the adult's leg and yawns. (Obs/10.9.18)

Her tiredness was evident as was the reassurance she gained from close physical proximity to an adult.

Cassandra also used touch: however, she initiated holding hands with me to take me to see various aspects in nursery (Obs/21.6.18) as well as to see things she wanted to photograph during the photo tour (23.10.18). There was strong classification between categories of what could and could not be touched in school (Bernstein, 2000). Generally, teachers encouraged children not to touch others particularly when sitting on the carpet when children were instructed to 'Keep their hands in their laps'; the exception was holding hands with their buddies on the way to and from service (Obs/8.10.18)

The role of touch was also referred to by the early years educator, Jill, when discussing the impact of being on the same site as the school. The two references made by adults to the sensory experiences of children entering school were both made by Jill.

Researcher: Mmm (.) Um does it make a difference to you being here as opposed to being at [previous location] in terms of transitioning?

Jill: Yes massive, we see the teacher more, they see people going past all the time. They see the big kids on the field, they see their siblings they can give them a kiss across the fence, you know.

Researcher: Yeah yeah, they keep coming back and just saying 'Hi' don't they through the fences

Jill: Yeah they wave at them

Researcher: It's nice

Jill: and they hold hands sometimes over the fence (Int/19.7.18)

It was interesting that children sought to cross the physical boundary that separated pre-school from school either by waving or reaching over the fence to gain physical contact with siblings or friends; all of these connected the children with others and flexed the strong classification (Bernstein, 2000) between the boundaries of pre-school and school.

Touch was the most frequently coded sense and highlighted the physical entanglements children experienced in this new context. From whole body awareness to the interaction between a surface and the skin and the sensation of uniform on the body, children's embodied experience of school was influenced by touch. Experiences of touch were significantly different for adults and children; they were vividly present for children yet largely overlooked by the adults.

4.1.3 Smell: flowers, handwash and bread

The sense of smell was another way that children experienced their new environment. Although the word 'smell' tends to have negative connotations, references to their olfactory experiences were both positive and negative but each elicited an emotional reaction. These micro-geographies, as Horton and Kraftl (2011) discuss, are often invisible to adults for whom the smells have become so familiar. However, they contribute to the feelings that children have about their new environment and can ultimately encourage or hinder participation. For example, Cassandra sniffed the handwash when she was first introduced to the toilet area and commented '*It smells yummy!*' (Obs/10.9.18) and she also chose to take a series of photos of flowers '*Betos [because] I like the smell of them.*' (23.10.18). During this experience she walked over and smelled them, her nose almost touching the flowers.



Figure 18 - Cassandra's photos of the flowers

Olivia also responded to smell in her photo tour, however, she disliked the smell of the Harvest bread exclaiming '*Eurgh!*' (23.10.18).

Their responses to the odours in their environment were closely associated with an emotional response; their verbalisations indicated their pleasure or displeasure at the experience.

4.1.4 Embodied experiences of food

In addition to frequency, 'critical moments' arose (Section 3.3) where children experienced an emotional reaction to a particular event. For those who had attended pre-school (Olivia, Sean, Xavier and Albert) the food was not actually new to them as the kitchens provided food for pre-school. For Jim and Cassandra, the food was new. One critical moment occurred for Jim during his first experience of lunch and is examined below as significant to his embodied experience of transition. As discussed in Section 3.7.3.1, intensity here refers to the emotional reaction to the experience. The experience of eating was frequently referred to by the children particularly that of lunchtime food which was provided by school. For five of the six children, food and lunchtime was referred to positively; for example, Olivia expressed her liking for lunch as part of her photo tour, drew a plate for her first draw and talk session and when asked what she liked to eat said '*Everything*'. (1.10.18)



Figure 19 - Olivia's drawing of a plate

Sean also referred to lunch during his draw and talk session focusing on his enjoyment of eating jelly. (1.10.18)

For all six children, the lunchtime space and the rules within it were new and entangled with the experience of eating the food in what could be defined as a 'foodscape' (Brembeck and Johansson, 2010, p.797). Observing and analysing this single event was important as it represented a time where the materialities of food and the objects associated with lunch intermingled with the adults and children within the striated space (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) of the lunchtime hall. In this section I focus on one element: the interaction between

Jim and his food. However, I return to the key event of lunch in Section 4.3.2 examining how bodies are schooled in this context.

Jim's mum had raised concerns with teaching staff that eating lunch might be challenging for him and had asked me '*Will someone be in with him at lunch?*' The newness of the food experience in school was highlighted when she added '*He's been fine at nursery, so we've said it's Tess's [his keyperson] food here. Tess makes the food.*' (Obs/24.9.18) They had tried to reassure him that the food would be familiar, however, the observation showed this was unsuccessful as he was fully aware of the difference in the food. As soon as he was seated at the table with his tray of food, his first anxious reaction concerned the unfamiliarity of how the food looked.

Looks at the food on his tray. Looks at me.

Jim: I have never, ever tried it before.

Looks back at food for about 3 seconds.

Jim: You know, I'm just going to try it.

Researcher: That's a great idea.

An adult comes over and says 'Give it a go Jim.'

Jim decided to try and eat and also made a connection to Cassandra who was sitting opposite him.

He looks at the different foods. He picks up the triangle of brown bread.

Jim: (to himself) I like bread.

He has a nibble and then quickly takes a sip of water.

He looks over at Cassandra's tray and says 'We've got the same - look!' Cassandra nods and smiles. (Obs/ 24.9.18)

Jim was motivated by his desire to conform to the expectations of lunchtime, to eat his food, drink his water and to talk quietly to his friends. Conforming to the prescribed actions of lunch contributed to children's identity of a school child, a body-in-place (Rossholt, 2012) and Jim was keen to achieve this. He continued to experience discomfort which he articulated although tried to contain.

Jim: My tummy's hurting me. The table's pushing me.

Cassandra, who is sitting opposite, pulls the table a little so it isn't near him. He picks up his fork and takes a small bit of rice/veg. He winces and looks at me.

Jim: I don't like it. (Obs/ 24.9.18)

Adults tried to support Jim with his eating within the constraints of lunchtime expectations. The interactions between the children and the adults showed the 'relational aspects of children's and adult's shared lives' (Hansen et al., 2017, p. 238) as they negotiated how much and how the food was to be eaten. Jim demonstrated his agency as he stated his dislike of the food and Ms Brown attempted to make it more manageable for him by changing the size of mouthfuls and lessening the amount that would be acceptable to eat.

Ms Brown comes and asks him how he is getting on.

Jim: I don't like the rice, or meatballs or the bread.

Ms Brown: Shall I cut the meatballs up smaller?

He nods. She cuts it very small and mixes the rice with the tomato/onion mix.

Ms Brown: Is that better?

Jim looks at it.

Jim: I don't like the peas.

Ms Brown takes them out. (Obs/24.9.18)

In this interchange the adult tried to make the experience easier for Jim, however it still posed a challenge. Jim's discomfort was difficult to watch as he wrestled with trying to eat food he did not like. Cassandra also did not like her food, however her response to the expectations revealed a different attitude. Jim accepted the rules and tried to control his breathing in order to eat his food. Although Cassandra did not want to eat her rice or peas and could have felt anxious about this, she appeared to reject the striations of adults deciding what and how much she should eat. She did not appear concerned about conforming and instead informed Ms. White confidently.

'I don't want the rice. Peas make me sick.' (Obs/ 24.9.18)

Her agency was expressed in an assertion of her preferences and a statement about possible consequences should she be asked to eat the peas after all. Ms White did not try to

encourage her to eat them but instead accepted her viewpoint. In contrast Jim continued to struggle on eating tiny mouthfuls washed down with water.

Ms. Brown moves away at this point to help someone else. Jim takes a tiny mouthful then looks over at her. He sips his water again then takes another tiny mouthful followed by a sip of water. Between each mouthful he puts his fork down so that he can hold the cup with two hands. His movements are hurried. He takes another forkful, puts the fork down, takes a deep breath and looks out of the window. He takes another forkful and puts his fork down. He looks at me and seems worried. He is not smiling. (Obs/24.9.18)

The intensity of experience at this point was painful as he worked to control his breathing, to use water to help him meet the expectation that he needed to eat. I was seated fairly near to him on a chair with my back to the wall; the amount of space available meant I was near enough for children to talk to me and I therefore became caught up in the interaction. Observing Jim trying to eat challenged my role as a researcher as I was affected by his anxiety; I experienced a tightening in my own stomach and an urge to sit beside him and help him overcome this and to change the mood. To engage with him, which I felt was the ethical thing to do, yet maintain my researcher position, I asked '*What does it taste like?*' rather than trying to offer a solution. He continued to look worried and replied, '*I don't know*' (Obs/24.9.18). Cassandra joined in with the conversation calling out '*Yummy!*' despite refusing to eat a large part of her meal.

Cassandra then raised her hand to gain permission to move onto the toffee mousse pudding and, seeing this, Jim did the same. Cassandra was granted permission and I was asked how much Jim had eaten. Again, I was drawn into the monitoring process with the adult assuming I could judge better than Jim whether he had eaten enough. I explained and he was told he could move onto his pudding which was a banana.

The interaction between Jim and Ms White highlighted the negotiation over what was allowed or not allowed in relation to the eating of lunch. He wanted to take the unfamiliar food off his tray asking, '*I empty it OK?*' however Ms. White replied '*No, have your banana first.*' (Obs/ 24.9.18) Although he had been given permission to move onto the next part of his meal, he was not allowed to get up and empty his tray part way through the meal. A striated space should not be assumed to be a negative entity that oppresses those within it as long as it can be challenged and 'lines of flight and new invention can become possible' (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p.104). Here however Jim's agency was constrained, a line of flight was not possible even though it could potentially have empowered him to smooth the space.

Jim did manage to consume his banana once Ms White opened it for him, the intense anxiety dissipated and he appeared more relaxed and breathed normally. He looked at me and said, *'It was too noisy in here a minute ago!' I say 'Was it?' He nodded* (Obs/24.9.18). The combined experience of noise levels, which he found loud, and unfamiliar food may have intensified Jim's experience of feeling anxious at lunchtime.

This experience was significant enough for Jim that he talked about it during the whole of his draw and talk session a week later as well as in his photo tour. In the draw and talk session he drew a plate and said, *'I like the food at lunchtime, I try it.'* (1.10.18) The final *'I try it'* resonated with the effort he put into his first lunchtime experience when attempting to eat this new food. He drew his plate, the cutlery and the food for the whole of the time he was engaged with the task.

Jim: I have to draw a round circle. And food. I have to do two lines. They're my tutlery [cutlery].

Researcher: OK.

Jim: Then I need that line across and I put my tutlery in there.

He focused on the importance of trying to eat his lunchtime food and announced:

Jim: I will ask her (Ms. White) if I eat (.) if I eat some of my food I might get a sticker!

Researcher: You might get a sticker?

Jim: Yeah. (1.10.18)

His pride and enjoyment appeared to come from the praise, perhaps a sense that he would be a 'body-in-place' (Rossholt, 2012) if he was being rewarded in this way for trying food. The subject of trying new foods continued to be relevant to him two weeks later as, during his photo tour, he chose to photograph the hall.

Researcher: Right. Where now?

Jim: Over there (.) in that place.

Researcher: Where? The hall?

Jim: Yeah. We eat dinner.

Researcher: You eat dinner in there? What's that like?

Jim: Um (.) good and yummy.

Researcher: Do you like it now?

Jim: Yeah. I I try things.

Researcher: You try things?

Jim: Yeah.

Researcher: 'Cos you were a bit nervous to start with weren't you? Do you feel like that now?

Jim: No. (23.10.18)

Although he was still focusing on the trying, he appeared to be feeling positive about his ability to do this. Jim's experience of transition was significantly influenced by his experience of lunch and he worked hard to overcome his physical reactions to this encounter with the unfamiliar food, the noise of the hall, the feel of the table on his tummy and the close supervision of adults to be a body-in-place, to successfully adapt to this new foodscape.

Starting school involves children's bodily presence in a new space. Strongly classified elements of the school experience (Bernstein, 2000) such as the boundaries between activities insulated by bells, between clothing to be worn in school, between what could and could not be touched in school and between what and how food could be eaten, all structured the transition experience for children. Within the specialised context of school, children's experiences were strongly framed (Bernstein, 2000) by teaching staff who were already familiar with this context and who experienced it differently. Adults were in control of the space and made decisions about where children sat, what they wore and how much they needed to eat. Children's experiences were embodied and multi-sensory as they became entangled with sounds, smells and textures which were new and unfamiliar. The sounds pervading the space, the sensation of surfaces and clothing on the skin, smells around them and the taste of lunchtime food formed the everyday micro-geographies within the classroom and wider school environment and impacted on children's lived experience. Apart from two references made by one early years educator, these multi-sensory interactions, which occurred every day and were vividly present for children, were not mentioned to me by adults (Figure 15).

4.2 Bodies encountering objects

When asked to photograph whatever they wanted to show me about school, all six children predominately photographed objects rather than people; out of 122 photographs, 103 were of objects (Appendix 17). Proximal processes in relation to objects in the microsystem of

school were therefore significant to the children's embodied experience of transition in this study. As discussed in Section 2.3.1 a 'more-than-human' approach (Lupton, 2019) was needed to examine these assemblages between children and the material world. Children's comments about the material world illustrated how objects carried meaning and were part of deciphering this new context. Assemblages between children and non-human matter were, at times, disempowering. As with *Multi-sensory bodies*, adults did not comment on this aspect of children's lived experience of starting school (Figure 15).

4.2.1 Objects carry meaning: 'I just need to take a photo of these chairs'.

Chairs used to sit on at lunchtime were the most photographed object with four of the children choosing to photograph them. Albert and Olivia focused on the colour.

Researcher: Ok what you going to take a photo of in here then?

Olivia: The chairs.

Researcher: Great. And tell me about the chairs.

Olivia: Mmmmmm

Researcher: Do you sit on those ones? (Olivia nods)

Have you got a best colour? (She nods.)

Which one do you like best?



Figure 20 - Olivia's photo of the chairs in the hall

Olivia: The green ones. (23.10.18)

These chairs positioned children and adults differently depending on the event taking place, a positioning which children were in the process of learning. Children were allowed to sit on these at lunchtime but not at service time when they were reserved for adults; in service children would sit on the floor. Objects are not neutral and children's encounters with them in these first few weeks of transition carried messages about how the body needed to behave in order to become a school child (Kind, 2014; Jones, 2013).

Zavier: I just need to take a photo of these chairs.

Researcher: Oh right why?

*Zavier: 'Cos I just **need** to!*

Researcher: Oh right, do you like those chairs?

Zavier: Yes!

Researcher: Do you sit on those?

Zavier: No. I just know them 'cos grown ups sit on them.



Figure 21 - Xavier's photo of hall chairs

((In overlap)) Researcher: (quietly) grown ups sit on them. Xavier: When it's service. (23.10.18)

Zavier identified the difference in the seating arrangement between the adults and the children in service; although he did not comment on the seating arrangement negatively or positively it was clear that he was becoming aware of the distinction made between how and where adults and children could sit. Jim stated their function and referred once again to lunchtime. He proceeded to take four photos of the chairs.

Jim: We sit on chairs at lunch. (Takes photo.) (23.10.18)



Figure 22 - Jim's photos of the chairs in the hall

This is where the member checking that I carried out after the tour was crucial to understanding what the children felt was significant. Jim had the opportunity to delete unwanted or duplicated photos yet chose to keep all four of these. Jim also referred to the seating arrangements in draw and talk saying that the older children '*don't sit on seats, they sit on the floor*' (15.10.18).

Chairs were important enough to children to be the most frequently photographed object and were part of the observation on lunchtime; they were also referred to in draw and talk but not in any of the adult data. The comments made by the children indicated their growing understanding of the messages conveyed by chairs about when they were or were not allowed to position themselves on them; a positioning decided upon by the adults.

4.2.2 Objects to decipher: 'What are these things?'

During my observations on the first day in school, there were times when children directly asked me about objects unfamiliar to them. School as a specialised context (Bernstein, 2000) contained specific objects which were either completely unfamiliar or had to be used/not used in an unfamiliar way. Some objects around the school were mysterious to children; as with learning about the meaning of the chairs, part of their transition was about 'recognition' of the rules associated with these objects including how they needed to use them in this school context (Bernstein, 2000, p.17). In the first session as a school child, Albert asked me about the construction resource set out on a table.

'What are these things?' I explain that they are called popoids and that you can build things with them. (Obs/10.9.18)

Within the toilet area, Xavier asked '*What's that thing?*' (Obs/10.9.18) about the urinal and then how to flush it and I explained that it self-flushed so did not work the same way as the toilet. Cassandra also noticed a drinking fountain and said '*Ooh a hand washer.*' (Obs/10.9.18) I explained how to use the button to produce water and how to bend and drink from it.

A significant element of the objects they photographed related to their unfamiliarity and children's curiosity about their purpose. As we walked around school, Xavier in particular chose to photograph unfamiliar objects. For example, he first took a photo in the playground and I asked for clarification about what he was photographing.

Researcher: That house?

Zavier: No! That thing (.) that drawin- on the floor.

Researcher: Oh that drawing on the floor! (excited tone) So why do you want to take a photo of that? Is it 'cos you love it or 'cos you don't like it or what?

Zavier: Uh 'cos I (.) 'cos I don't know what we do with it.

Researcher: You don't know what you do with it, right. So you'd like to find out would you?



Figure 23 - Xavier's photo of the playground

Zavier: Yea. (He checks photo by tapping on the screen) (23.10.18)

His choices were often motivated by curiosity or mystification with either what the object was or what it was used for. He chose to photograph a poster of a fox in the corridor explaining why he has chosen it.

Zavier: That thing there 'cos we don't do anything.

Researcher: Because what sorry?

Zavier: We don't do with anything with that fox.

Researcher: You don't do anything with that fox. Ok, right.

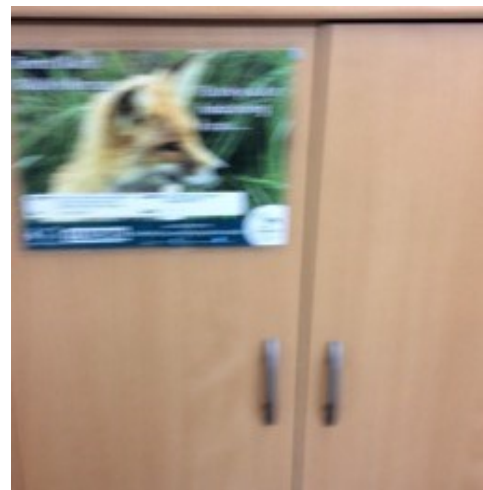


Figure 24 - Xavier's photo of a fox

Zavier also chose to take a photo of a 'painting' he had identified on the wall.

Zavier: Don't know what that painting's for so I'll just (Takes photo).

Researcher: Which painting? Where?

Zavier: That one. (Points)
(23.10.18)

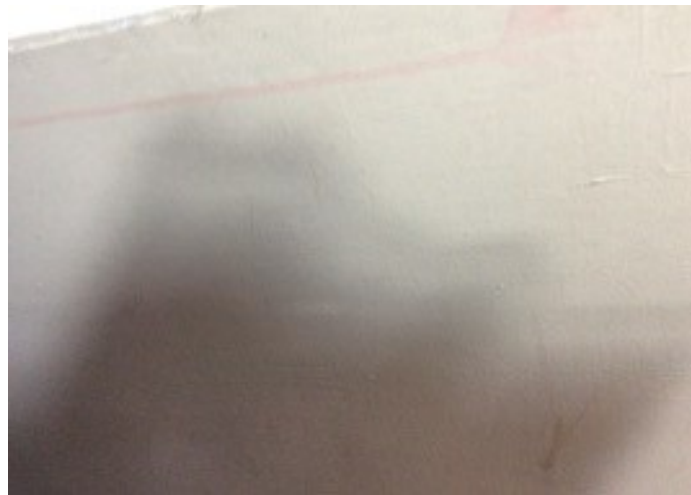


Figure 25 - Xavier's photo of a 'painting'

This area of wall was just a rougher part of the wall however Xavier named it a painting and chose to include it in his photo tour.

Some objects that children were unfamiliar with, and curious about, related to the school's Church of England status. Part of children's transition experiences was recognising the specialised features of this place as a Church of England school. The boundary was strong between objects used for collective worship and other objects; the candle and snuffer were kept on a separate table, placed on a gold cloth and could only be used during collective worship led by an adult. Learning how to behave in relation to these special, protected objects was part of learning the 'regulative discourse' of the school (Bernstein, 2000, p.102).

As it was October, the school was celebrating Harvest which meant the Harvest bread was on display in the corridor. This object was commented on by three of the six children: Jim, Albert and Olivia.

Researcher: Let's see if there's anything in this bit that you want to take a photo of.

Jim: I want one here.

Researcher: You want to take a picture here? You can. Why do you want to take a picture of that Jim?

Jim: I do 'cos I don't know what that is. (Takes photo.)



Figure 26 - Jim's photo of the Harvest bread

Researcher: 'Cos you don't know what it is. Ok. (23.10.18)

Albert had clearly already been asking others about what it was and why it was there.

Albert: What's that for? (Walking past Harvest loaf on low interactive display area in corridor)

Researcher: Harvest.

Albert: Mummy thought it um um ...Drew and a girl from Year 1 thought it was for out the playground (inaudible) hungry but it for Harvest. (23.10.18)

Olivia too was curious about this object and reached out to touch it.

Researcher: (O touches the harvest bread.) Shouldn't touch the bread darling.

Olivia: S'that real bread? (23.10.18)

As well as learning what the object was, the children were learning what they could and could not do with it in this context. This display although positioned at a low level was for looking at rather than physically interacting with.

Other religious objects that had been recently introduced to the children as part of service were the candles and snuffer. These were photographed by four of the children: Sean, Xavier, Cassandra and Albert. Albert, Xavier and Cassandra took one photograph each although Cassandra did not refer to it verbally. Sean took and chose to keep two photos and wanted to show me what they did in service.

Sean: That's what we do for um (.) service as well.

Researcher: These?

Sean: Yeah, candles. (23.10.18)



Figure 27 - Sean's two photos of the candles for service

Zavier also chose the candles and described how they were lit and put out as part of the service; he was not yet sure of the role of the snuffer.

(Zavier points to the candles.)

Researcher: Oh let's look at the candles (.) 'Cos you come into service now don't you?

Zavier: Yeah and we blow out candles and (.) put them on.

*Researcher: You blow them out **and** put them on do you?*

Zavier: And we do something with that thing.

Researcher: And what are the candles for?

Zavier: For lighting them up. (23.10.18)



Figure 28 - Zavier's photo of the candles for service

Albert spoke about the turn taking rules associated with this object as different children were chosen each service time to light the candles and snuff them out.

Albert: I wi- I I I didn't have a turn I can't I didn't have a turn to to to um put a candle on.

Researcher: So you haven't had a turn at that no?

Albert: No. Put the bell on it.

Researcher: That's right, that's to put it out isn't it. (23.10.18)



Figure 29 - Albert's photo of the candles for

Although the candles were core objects of symbolism for service Albert was still in the process of learning about why this ritual took place; its intended meaning was not yet part of his understanding.

Researcher: Why do we have candles at service do you know?

Albert: To make us warm by the teachers here.

Researcher: To make us what?

Albert: The teacher warm when they're sitting here.

Researcher: Oh, to make the teacher warm while they're sitting here. Ok. (23.10.18)

The ritual of choosing a child to light the candles at the start of the service and then choosing a child to snuff them out with the snuffer had been a core part of his remembering the experience of service even if the symbolic meaning was not.

Children chose to photograph objects which were new or unfamiliar to them in this new space, some of which related to the specialised nature of a Church of England school (Bernstein, 2000) and specific religious events such as service and the celebration of Harvest. As with the chairs, these objects were not referred to by the adults in their interviews although they featured heavily in children's photo tours. Children's interest in, and developing understanding of, these unfamiliar objects formed part of their lived experience of entering the new space of school.

4.2.3 Objects that disempower: 'I can't do this tap'.

Another key element of children's embodied experience as they transitioned in Reception class was the proximal processes they experienced with everyday objects in the microsystem of school. Objects are defined here as the 'materialities of the everyday' (Hansen et al., 2017, p.239) as opposed to objects which had been specifically selected as teaching resources to 'invite manipulation and exploration' (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p.815). Children's physical encounters with everyday objects were sometimes empowering, for example, water bottles were brought in each day and stored on a trolley that children were able to reach. At designated times, children could access these independently and all could drink from them unaided (A, C, J, O, S, Z/Obs/10.9.18).

In contrast, other everyday objects were particularly challenging given the children's physical size and strength and some were even disempowering as they hindered children's ability to function independently in this space. The bathroom was an area which caused challenge for some children. All six children were able to use the toilet near the classroom independently; however, I observed difficulties with using the taps and the soap dispenser, both of which required pushing. For example, during the induction afternoon Sean called out '*I can't do this tap. It's so hard!*' (Obs/25.6.18) In addition, in the first September session in school neither Sean nor Cassandra could press the soap dispenser with enough force to dispense the soap whilst Xavier and Cassandra could not press down hard enough on the taps to make the water come out (Obs/10.9.18). Children were encouraged to help each other in these circumstances and a specific demonstration was given on the first day to show children the most effective way to achieve success with getting water and soap such as using the heel of the hand.

Their physical size in relation to the objects also impacted on the ease with which they could complete tasks. In the second session in school Xavier, the physically smallest of the six children, struggled to reach the tray where he had to put his book away at the start of the day:

He reaches to try and put his book into the tray and stretches up on tip toes. He can't see the tray easily. (Obs/11.9.18)

At playtime, the children used the toilets adjacent to the playground: the Year 4 toilet area. Olivia commented on her dislike of them because of their size.

Olivia says she doesn't need to go but is asked to try anyway. She says she doesn't like the toilets because they are too big. She is asked to have a go and she goes into

the cubicle. She then comes out and says 'I can't reach the flush'. The flush is one that dangles down and you pull it. The adult does it for her. (Obs/11.9.18)

Agency is dynamic and emerges from the intra-action between human and non-human matter (Barad, 2007); Olivia's response was to take action to avoid having to use the larger toilets, however, she was asked to try. The size of the children and the scale of the objects led to a disempowering intra-action that meant that Olivia could not use the toilet independently. 'In the moment' support for children as they adapted to the space and objects around them was evident, however the objects themselves and the requirement to use them was not smoothing the transitional experience of the children in these first few weeks.

There were several physical challenges for the children as they experienced lunch for the first time. Stepping up and down from the long wooden step in front of the lunch counter was difficult for some to co-ordinate especially when carrying their tray. For example, Xavier stepped down very slowly from the step looking carefully where he was putting his feet (Obs/24.9.18).



Figure 30 - The step in front of the lunch counter

Carrying the tray itself was also a new skill for Xavier too and he was reminded to '*Hold it with two hands*' (MsW/Obs/24.9.18). He moved unsteadily with it and an adult helped him to steady the tray before he walked slowly to his seat with elbows out to balance the tray. When clearing up, the challenge of carrying the tray was apparent again. Cassandra tried to carry her tray with one hand and it wobbled and nearly fell. Ms. White helped her saying

'Two hands!' (Obs/24.9.18) The assemblages between the children and the materialities of lunchtime (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) were strongly framed by the teaching staff (Bernstein, 2000); there was a specific order of actions to follow when getting up to clear away lunch. Ms Brown explained they needed to stand up, tuck their chairs in and then pick up their tray. Jim picked up his tray then tried to stand. Ms Brown emphasised that he needed to stand up and put his chair under first so that his hands would be free for the tray (Obs/24.9.18). The prescribed set of instructions was, as with the handwashing, designed to help children adapt their bodies and succeed at these tasks. Overall, all six children displayed 'generative force characteristics' (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p.810) in that they all actively tried to carry out the required tasks even when finding it physically difficult. The striated space of lunchtime and its impact on children's agency is discussed further in Section 4.3.2.

Encounters with objects in this transition period were significant for children and influenced their experience. In the specialised context of school (Bernstein, 2000) objects often carried specialised meaning and had to be used or not used in particular ways at particular times. The intra-actions that children experienced between themselves and the objects in this context contributed to children's knowledge of the school's 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.102). Objects such as chairs influenced how children came to know how they were positioned within different spaces at different times of the day; mediated the experience of events specific to school such as service; and some were mysterious, both in terms of what they were and how they were to be used. All six children wanted to learn what objects were and how they should be used, displaying 'generative force characteristics' (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p.810) as they tried to understand and use these objects in the required way. Some objects hindered their sense of autonomy and control; adults were responsive to these difficulties in the moment structuring children's physical actions so they would be able to adapt and master these objects. The emphasis was on children adapting to their new environments despite physical difficulties such as their size in relation to the scale of everyday objects around them; environments were not adapted for them.

4.3 Bodies becoming 'schooled'

Starting school represented a time when demands on the body became more prescribed. Being able to meet these demands successfully was necessary if children were to demonstrate that they had become a school child. Creating a 'docile' or 'schooled' body (Foucault, 1977; Dixon, 2011) involved learning to sit still in the correct position, how and when to speak or be silent, and how to regulate bodily functions to the correct times of the day. Proximal processes relating to the senses and to children's encounters with objects have been examined in previous sections. In this section I examine the proximal processes between children and adults in two key striated spaces (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987): the carpet at 'carpet time' and the hall during lunchtime and service. These are contrasted with the smoother space of the playground.

4.3.1 Striated spaces: carpet time

One of the most intensely striated spaces in the school was the carpet area when being used for whole class gatherings under the surveillance of one or two adults. This occurred at least four times a day. Striated and smooth spaces (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) are not fixed entities nor defined as inherently negative or positive (Section 2.3.1.1). The carpet area was used for many things, some of which promoted a smooth space, for example building with construction. Some uses had strong classification (Bernstein, 2000) which created a highly striated space, such as registration time. Registration was also strongly framed by teachers who were explicit in their teaching of the carpet time rules as part of the transition experience. The strong classification and framing of registration structured the environment so that children were explicitly taught the required practices in this space at this time. The rules were depicted with large pictures along the side of the space:



Figure 31 - 'Carpet time' rules

The legs, hands and lips were all specifically directed to do particular things and this was observed closely by adults and corrected if necessary. It was a space where power was exerted through the assemblage of children, teaching staff, carpet and chairs. The rules and

practices impacted on the physical experiences of children transitioning into school as they were expected to position their bodies in particular ways and to control their voices and their physical urges.

Rules for positioning the body were particularly emphasised in the first session when all 26 children attended together. Children were praised by the teaching staff for sitting in the cross-legged position with hands in lap. *'You're sitting the smartest, well done.'*

(MsB/Obs/24.9.18) All six children attempted to follow these rules, for example, Cassandra was kneeling, looked at the girl next to her and then crossed her legs to mirror her position. They all seemed to want to conform to the group rules, to take on the image of a school child. Where they struggled to get into the required posture or if they forgot, the rules were reinforced with verbal reminders and on occasion physical prompts. In this space teachers sat on chairs, positioned higher than the children sitting on the carpet. This meant it was easier to observe the children and to correct their bodies in a 'microscope of conduct' (Foucault, 1977, p.174).

During the first carpet time in school Cassandra was asked to *'sit smartly'*

(MsB/Obs/10.9.18) and altered her position from sitting between her knees to sitting in a cross-legged position. The second time the children were called to the carpet during the same session, Cassandra knelt again, and the teacher reminded her to cross her legs. *'Put your legs like this'* (MsB/Obs/10.9.18) and leaned over to physically help her cross her legs. In this striated space, no deviation from the prescribed actions was possible, small physical details were explained, observed and corrected consistently.

The space on the carpet became even more striated once children were attending fulltime and phonics teaching began. The space was demarcated into lines with masking tape and the names of children written along it to show them where they were to sit.

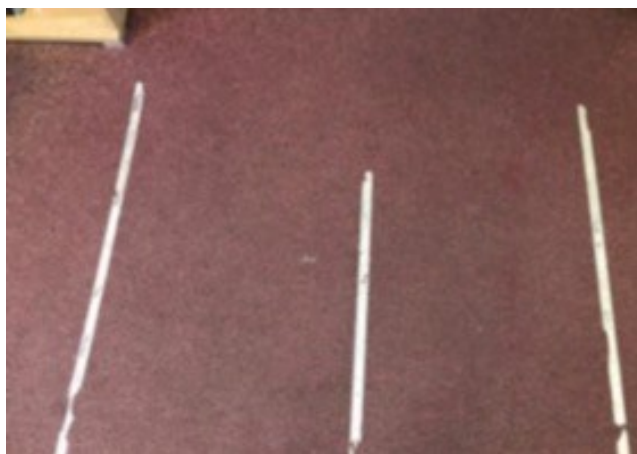


Figure 32 - Demarcating space on the carpet with masking tape lines

'Partitioning' individuals so that each had a specific place to sit resonated with Foucault's definition of 'docile bodies' with one aim being to avoid individuals wandering away from the space. The verbalised aim from the teacher's point of view was to maximise the ability of all children to engage and attend to the teaching from the adult. Children were therefore positioned near to the teacher if they needed to be under closer surveillance to maintain their position and children who were able to achieve the correct position consistently were placed next to those who found it harder in order to provide a model. This space could be defined as a 'functional site' (Foucault, 1977, p.143) where power was exerted over a group of individuals in order to supervise and control.

4.3.1.1 Controlling the voice at carpet time

As well as the physical requirements of sitting in particular ways for particular lengths of times, the children were also required to control their voices and language. Regulating noise levels in the classroom was a key aspect in these early weeks, a finding that concurs with Gallagher (2010, p.268) who found that 'achieving quiet' was a significant theme in primary school. In order to speak in a whole class situation the carpet rule of 'Hands up and wait with lips closed' was taught and reinforced. Cassandra called out during her first carpet time session and was reminded to put her hand up. She continued to struggle with this rule during carpet time on the second session of school.

Cassandra starts chatting loudly about what she can see. Ms Brown says 'We must use an inside voice in here.' Cassandra looks down and blushes. She looks over to me and slightly smiles, then looks at the teacher. Ms Brown reminds everyone not to talk on the carpet and Cassandra puts her fingers to her lips. (Obs/11.9.18)

Her body was affected by the interaction as she tried to conform to the image of a 'docile body' made visible through her blushing and withdrawal of her gaze which suggested her embarrassment. This was further supported by looking over for reassurance. In addition, her finger to her lips suggests her determination to try to comply with these new rules. I was affected by this interaction too, smiling back as she looked at me and nodding to reassure her that she was doing fine. I had an urge to go to her and say not to worry which I was unable to do in the role I was in; I had to be still and quiet too.

As well as trying to stay quiet, children were required to talk at certain times and in certain ways. For example, the register was part of the 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.102) and key phrases needed to be learnt and copied. First the teacher spoke and signed 'Good morning children' before the whole class repeated in unison 'Good morning Ms. Brown, Good morning Ms. White.' The register was then taken by the teacher saying good

morning to each child in turn and each child replying. 'Good morning Ms. Brown'. Five of the children complied with this during the first session in school, however Olivia was too shy:

Olivia looks down at the floor when her name is called for the register. She hunches her shoulders and tilts her head. Ms Brown says 'Practise tomorrow!' and moves on. (Obs/10.9.18)

The hunch of her body and tilt of her head indicated her discomfort and her wish to end the interaction which was acted on by the teacher as she did not persist in requiring a response at this time. 'Tomorrow' however, a response would be encouraged more strongly.

The language to ask to go to the toilet was also specified on the first day of attending school, conveying the message of what was considered suitable for a school child.

We must ask an adult. We don't say 'I need a wee or I need a poo. You're big children now at big school and we say 'Please may I go to the toilet. (MsB/ Obs/10.9.18)

Immediately Cassandra attempted to conform to this rule.

Cassandra puts her hand up and asks 'Can I go for a wee.' She stops and thinks then says 'Can I go to the toilet?' The teacher says 'Please may I go to the toilet?' Yes you may. (Obs/10.9.18)

The following day Cassandra asked again at whole class time again following the required language.

Cassandra puts her hand up. Ms Brown says 'Yes Cassandra' and Cassandra asks 'Please may I go to the toilet?' Ms Brown replies 'Yes, well done Cassandra that's right.' (Obs/11.9.18)

Cassandra was only out of the classroom for two minutes which made me reflect on whether Cassandra was attempting to show and practise her ability to conform to the language being asked of her or whether she did in fact need the toilet. Alternatively, she could have discovered 'evasive stealth tactics' identified by Gallagher (2010, p.270) as a way that children manage to escape the surveillance of the teacher.

4.3.1.2 Managing the timing of bodily urges

Managing the timing of bodily functions was a significant part of learning the rhythm in microtime (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006), regulating impulses until the correct time of the day. As well as controlling their urge to go to the toilet, children needed to learn to eat at

specific times. The restrictions of when eating was allowed became apparent during the research process, for example when Olivia announced, '*I'm hungry*' (15.10.18) during draw and talk and when Cassandra asked, '*Is it snack yet?*' (23.10.18) during the photo tour. Over this transition period, before the direct teaching had begun, children were introduced to going to the toilet at playtime or during their free choosing sessions and to eating at snack time and lunchtimes. In this way the priority of 'official' school knowledge (Bernstein, 2000, p.65) was established, particularly during carpet time.

Carpet time was a key space for 'schooling' children's bodies as they began their school lives. The strong classification and framing of this space when the whole class gathered created a highly striated space where individuals were required to carry out specific actions. Occurring at least four times a day, these events impacted on children's bodies as adults taught children the expected body positions to demonstrate attentive listening, the body position required to gain permission to speak, the language to be used and the requirement to control bodily urges for the duration of the event. Vigilant surveillance by adults ensured children were adhering to these requirements and, where children struggled, adults intervened to ensure their compliance.

4.3.2 Striated spaces: lunchtime in the hall

When children entered the hall at lunchtime, they encountered another strongly classified, striated space (Bernstein, 2000; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). The hall was set up with rows of tables and chairs.



Figure 33 - Rows of tables and chairs at lunchtime in the hall

The significance of the hall space was at its most visible during this first lunchtime as the rules and expectations in this strongly classified and framed setting (Bernstein, 2000) were explicitly laid out. The rules directed the children's bodies and were enforced and reinforced during the event. As this was their first lunchtime, these rules were explained and modelled by teaching staff. Details were given about how they needed to line up to wait to be called to the kitchen counter, how they needed to collect, eat and clear up their meal and then how to go out to play in the playground.

We walk in a nice quiet line and we stand on the line, we don't lean on the tables.

Olivia will come along. Xavier stay there until you're called. This is Jenn (the cook) and she will put Olivia's dinner out on her tray. We go along (.)

*Step down. Careful. (She checks she steps off the step safely.) and now choose your pudding. You choose **one** and tell Jenn in a big voice.*

Now we take our tray and come over to the table. You choose a knife and fork and a cup.

Then we take the tray with two hands, watch where we're going. Walk down to here and then put the tray down and sit down.

You must drink all your water. When you've eaten your dinner, this bit, (indicates the savoury bit) put your hand up.

Then we will come over and have a look and when you've eaten your lunch you put your hand up and ask 'Can I have my pudding please?'

Then when you've finished your pudding you put your hand up again and ask to leave the table.

Then you take the tray over to the trolley. Put your knife, fork and spoon underneath in the bowl and your empty cup in the bowl.

You then scrape your dinner into the bin and go out to play on the playground. If you need your coat you can go and get that first. We never ever come back inside without telling an adult. (MsW/Obs/24.9.18)

The rules were that they remain in this space until given permission to clear their trays and walk out to play. Leaving the hall meant leaving adult surveillance; adults had to supervise lunch and therefore children needed to stay for the duration of the meal. There was evidence that the dining space was defining the power relations between children and adults (Pike,

2008) with adults directing and supervising the actions of the children in detail. Narrow pathways between the rows of tables allowed children access and adults to supervise and interact with them. Adults walked up and down watching the children closely in case they needed help to cut up food and to monitor what they ate and drank. For example, Ms. White checked on Jim's water as she walked past

'Good boy, you've drunk all your water. You can have some more. You can always ask for more water.' She moves away. (Obs/24.9.18)

They also needed to be able to see when children raised their hands to judge whether they could move on to the next part of their lunch and whether they had eaten and drunk enough overall. This kind of surveillance drew on a view of the child as needing the protection of adults to ensure each child received enough food and drink to support them for the rest of the day; a 'surveillance as care' (Steeves and Jones, 2010, p.187). Although well intentioned, the effect of such monitoring meant a reduction in children's autonomy over their own needs. Raising their hands and waiting to be told if they had eaten enough for example bypassed the acknowledgement that hunger in children might vary. Managing to eat enough food to sustain them until the next designated eating time was part of children's experience; Section 4.4.4 describes how hungry children were after school. Staff were keen to support children to eat as much of the food on their plate, perhaps in an effort to mitigate this.

Although surveillance was key to maintaining order and an efficient lunchtime, it was in practice 'discontinuous' (Gallagher, 2010, p.266) as adults were also engaged in cutting up food, pouring water and encouraging children to eat and drink. There were times when children deviated from the rules such as when Olivia picked up her meatball with her fingers to place it onto the fork or when Xavier licked his food to taste it and used his fingers rather than his cutlery.

He uses his fingers to pick up a meatball and then puts it down. He picks up a slice of bread, licks it and takes a bite. He smiles. He takes another big bite. He pokes the end of it into his mouth with a finger. He picks up a meatball with his right hand and eats it. (Obs/24.9.18)

These moments went unnoticed and therefore unremarked on. Other moments of deviating from the rules were seen in relation to going to the toilet.

4.3.2.1 Managing the timing of bodily urges

As this was a time designated for eating, it was not a time to be going to the toilet: that had been before leaving the classroom. Albert walked to the hall doorway and an adult asked,

'Did you go to the toilet when you were asked?' He nodded and left the hall. The adult called to the rest of the class *'You must go to the toilet before you go in the hall. You can't keep leaving!'* (Obs/24.9.18) Even in this striated space, however, Cassandra did find a way to exercise her agency. Cassandra was sitting near me and drew me into the interaction. She wriggled in her seat and said quietly *'I think I'm desperate.'* I relayed this to the adult who replied *'Ok then Cassandra, go quick. I don't want this happening tomorrow.'* (Obs/24.9.18)

Lunchtime in the hall was a strongly striated space with a multitude of instructions about what the body needed to do and in what order. 'Surveillance as care' (Steeves and Jones, 2010, p.187) resulted in a loss of autonomy for children regarding how much they ate or when they went to the toilet. It was, however, discontinuous and some children found ways to exercise their agency and smooth the space.

4.3.3 Striated spaces: service in the hall

Surveillance over children's bodies was further reinforced during the first experience of service. With the whole school seated in the hall there were approximately 140 children and two members of teaching staff to supervise. The task of surveillance was handed over to the Year 4 buddies who were a significant part of the experience of service for Reception (Appendix 18). As with carpet time and lunchtime, the hall during service was a strongly classified and highly striated space (Bernstein, 2000; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) with prescribed practices for the body including the voice. To induct Reception, their older buddies sat right next to them, modelling what to do, watching them and correcting if not. Some smiled encouragingly at Reception during this new experience; the buddies were therefore both a source of comfort as well as benevolent observers policing their actions.

Some Reception children looked to their buddy during the service for support. Jim, when trying to copy the signing looked at his buddy and then tried to imitate his signing. Albert turned to his buddy when the head teacher was talking about the Lord's Prayer. Albert smiled, his buddy smiled back, and they then turned to look at the head teacher once again. Interaction with their buddies was, however, mainly around maintaining the prescribed seating position. When the Reception children moved out of the required cross-legged, hands in lap, facing forwards position, the buddies often modelled how to sit or reminded them to return to this position. For example, as they sat waiting for the rest of the school to arrive, Cassandra turned round and waved at children sitting behind her; her buddy shook her head and demonstrated expected behaviour by placing her hands in her lap in an exaggerated gesture. Cassandra copied by putting her own hands into her lap. The buddy responded by putting an arm round Cassandra and smiling at her. Cassandra smiled back. This type of interaction occurred again once the service had begun when the head teacher

was explaining that in service time they would talk and think about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Cassandra wriggled and her buddy leaned towards her and smiled. Cassandra smiled back and stopped wriggling. Modelling and moving Cassandra into the correct physical position also extended to the position required to recite the Lord's Prayer. Cassandra did not put her hands together, so her buddy leaned over and moved Cassandra's hands into the prayer position. She also demonstrated shutting her eyes by exaggerating the movement. Cassandra giggled quietly but kept her hands together. The constant supervision resulted in all six children trying to conform for the 20 minute service.

The requirement to maintain a cross-legged position and keep still was challenging for all the children, highlighting the physical demands of such a task for these four-year-olds (Goddard-Blythe, 2004). Children appeared to use behaviours such as licking and sucking of hands and fingers to comfort themselves as they tried to maintain a docile body. At the start of service Albert sucked his fingers, bent his ear repeatedly then yawned. During the hymn, Xavier sighed and leaned towards his buddy. He sat up, put his hand to the top of his head and wiped it down his face. He licked his fingers then looked at them, and later sucked the heel of his hand. Cassandra put her finger in her mouth and Olivia licked her hand and put her fist to her mouth then later she sucked her fingers. There was also evidence of tiredness with Xavier even starting to lie down until corrected:

He then starts to lie down. His buddy taps him on the arm and whispers to sit up. He does. (Obs/8.10.18)

Having to sit still on the hall floor with crossed legs for this length of time and in a hot hall attending to an adult as they talked, placed physical demands on children's bodies. The observation detailed how challenging this was for children and how tiring they found sustaining this bodily position. Fatigue following service is further discussed in *Bodies reacting*.

4.3.3.1 Controlling the voice during service

As with the requirement to control their voices at carpet time, knowing when to keep quiet, and when to speak and with what combination of words was also evident during the observation of service. I was struck by the tiny amount of speech recorded for the six children during service; there was only one instance where Albert asked for help to tuck his shirt in whilst still in the classroom, and no speech recorded at all in the hall. The expectation of service was that they watch the adult at the front and respond verbally according to the ritual. For example, a child was chosen to light the candles at the front and say '*I'm lighting this candle to show...*' The rest of the school then chanted '*That Jesus is the light of the*

world. At the end of service, a child was chosen to snuff the candle out. The child said, *'God be with you'* and the school chanted *'God be with you too.'* Children were also required to respond verbally in service to say the Lord's Prayer and to join in singing the hymns. As this was their first experience of service, none of the children were aware of these requirements and therefore did not speak. In this tightly controlled, striated space (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) there was evidence of children 'smoothing' the space through their use of non-verbal communication resulting in some sort of connection between them and another child or adult. Gaining eye contact and smiling was evident from the start. As Cassandra entered and sat down, she looked over at me and smiled; as I smiled back, there was a sense of recognition and enjoyment at that recognition. Cassandra also smiled at her buddy after each instance of her buddy correcting her behaviour; Albert smiled at his buddy twice. Waving was another form of non-verbal communication used by both Olivia and Cassandra, creating moments of connection with others within this space: attempts to wave at other children was discouraged by her buddy but Cassandra waved at me as she left the hall whilst Olivia waved and smiled at her brothers as they left the hall at the end.

The strong classification and framing of the hall during service created a highly striated space where children were schooled into the many expectations of service. Older children rather than adults helped children to meet these bodily expectations through modelling and correction. As with the strongly striated spaces of carpet time and lunchtime, children found ways to smooth the space and made non-verbal connections. Achieving the bodily requirements was challenging and children's reactions are discussed further in Section 4.4.

4.3.4 A smooth space: the playground

These more striated spaces contrasted with the freer movement and vocalisations in larger smoother spacings such as the playground. In contrast to objects that were yet to be understood and striated spaces where they worked hard to control the movements of their bodies and voices, these were times when children moved freely and used their voices vociferously. During the photo tour the children ran to locations they wanted to photograph such as Sean running into the large playground. Cassandra used movement to explore the space of the hall during her photo tour asking me if I could move in the same way.

Researcher: Can I do what? (Cassandra leaps about in the big space) Not very easily Cassandra no, your legs are much stronger than mine I think.

Cassandra: ((Laughs)) Yeah. (23.10.18)

Her movement indicated her enjoyment at being able to leap and move in the much larger space when free from the expectations of service or lunch. In this currently smooth space Cassandra had more freedom to move as she wished. She also used movement to show me how she felt about the climbing wall in the playground.

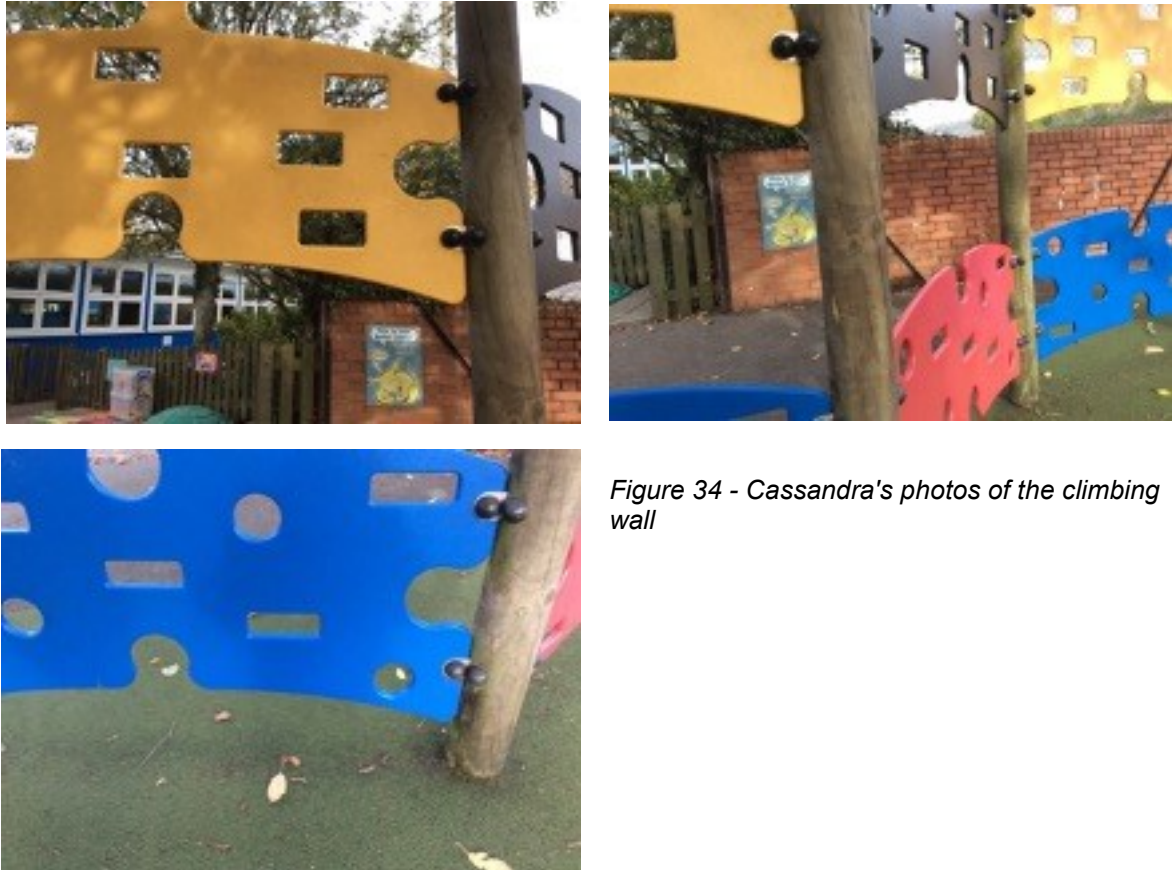


Figure 34 - Cassandra's photos of the climbing wall

Researcher: Well tell me what it's like for you on there. I've never been on it. What's it like Cassandra?

Cassandra: It's (.) let me just check.

Researcher: Is it easy to go on?

Cassandra: Yeah can I show you?

Researcher: Yeah!

(Cassandra climbs on)

Cassandra: I'm so high up!

Researcher: You are! (23.10.18)

Her enjoyment related to her ability to master this climbing frame and to position herself high above me and the playground.

Movement occurred most frequently in spaces where adults were not controlling children's actions to the same degree. The smoother spaces were the empty hall, the Forest school area, the field and the playground. The children ran in the playground when playing catch or football.

Olivia plays with her brother running and chasing.

*When they have finished snack, **Zavier, Albert, Sean and Jim** play football in a large group running and calling to each other to pass the ball. (Obs/11.9.18)*

Just as striated spaces could be smoothed, so too could smooth spaces become more striated: when playing football, children followed rules and, when the older children came out, were guided by their refereeing judgements.

The volume of voice was different in the playground too with children 'calling' to one another in this larger, freer space. This was similar to the observations from pre-school where Xavier, Albert and Sean ran up and down the ramp connecting inside and outside spaces.

Albert and Sean are running up and down ramp chasing an adult. They are roaring with arms outstretched. The adult sees me and says 'Albert always asks to play this dragon game'. They continue to roar and run. They run to the playhouse and roar. Xavier comes out of the house and chases them up the ramp. (Obs/19.7.18)

Whereas the rules regarding movement outside seemed to be similar, the reactions of adults to moving within the classroom spacings were different. In pre-school, Xavier

throws a bag across the carpet, picks it up and then runs to the book corner. He takes a box out of it and hands it to Sean. Xavier runs to the shop area squeezes between a child and the counter.

Adult says 'Shall we get that door open so you can go outside?' (Obs/19.7.18)

The adult appeared to be interpreting the expression of movement as a need for a freer space to move in; the space needed to be changed. In contrast, in school, Xavier and Olivia walked with increasing speed round and round the classroom and were asked to stop.

***9.10am:** Xavier and Olivia are walking round and round the classroom with Olivia following Xavier. Walking increasingly fast and laughing. Adult reminds them 'We*

don't run inside the classroom.' Xavier and Olivia go to the whiteboard and begin writing on that. (Obs/24.9.18)

The emphasis was on the children changing their bodies to the more striated space of the classroom and to adapt their movements to the expectations of the classroom.

The playground offered a smoother space where actions were not so prescribed, and surveillance of adults or older children, though not absent, was less than in the striated spaces of carpet time, lunchtime and service. In these first few weeks of school, children's bodies were schooled by adults and older children into meeting the bodily requirements for specific spaces and specific events. Knowing when and how to sit, speak and move in striated and smooth spaces within school formed a key part of the embodied experience of starting school.

4.3.5 Adults describing the embodied transition

This section examines how adults described the school transition. As will be seen in the following sections, much of this discussion involved commenting on what it meant for children to be school ready and these indicated different models of readiness in different settings.

Educators' views, particularly in school, were generally 'empiricist' (Meisels, 1999; Dockett and Perry, 2002), focusing on skills and behaviours children needed to demonstrate to be judged as 'school ready' and that educators needed to teach. Some early years educators' comments tended towards a 'maturationist' model (Meisels, 1999; Dockett and Perry, 2002): they referred to starting school as a natural stage of development which children became ready for as they grew older and felt that some were not at that stage; being younger in the cohort was seen as adding additional challenge to the school transition. Although the gradual school induction process (Figure 8) could be viewed as reflecting an 'interactionist' approach, offering shorter days and a gradual introduction to key events such as lunchtime to help children adjust, teaching staff identified this time as being *'probably more about the adults in the setting'* with the goal of getting to know the children and inducting them into *'rules and boundaries'* (MsB/Int/17.9.18). This 'empiricist' view emphasised children learning what they needed to do and demonstrating appropriate behaviours, and staff identifying and addressing any gaps in knowledge of the 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.102).

After identifying embodiment as a key focus of children's experiences in their transition to school (Section 3.7.3.2), school readiness discussions were re-examined through an embodiment lens. Interestingly, much of the adults' discussion about what it meant to be ready or unready had related directly to bodily requirements: self-care and conforming to the

bodily requirements associated with the 'regulative discourse' of the classroom (Bernstein, 2000, p.102). Self-care related to toileting, washing hands, eating lunch and managing their clothing whilst conforming to the bodily requirements of sitting still and listening as a whole class, lining up, modulating voices and holding a pencil. Early years educators and parents prepared children to achieve these skills and school reinforced them during transition with the aim of creating children who were ready to receive the learning as effectively as possible. The following sections explore the views of parents, early years educators and teaching staff in turn.

4.3.6 Parents preparing children's bodies for school

Prior to their child starting school, parents' comments in the interviews focused on how ready they felt they and their child was for school. I deliberately did not use the word ready or readiness in my questioning; however, parents used this vocabulary unprompted. Many of their concerns with unreadiness related to aspects of the body: how well children could look after themselves in the toilet, cope with school clothing and eat the school meals. In addition, they focused on how well their children could conform to expectations of the classroom: sitting still and concentrating as well as holding a pencil. Communication between parents and educators was also changing in that there was less information about what was happening with their children's bodies whilst away from parents. Parents themselves were also experiencing expectations on their own bodies in terms of how near or far they were expected to position themselves to their children.

4.3.6.1 Managing self-care: toileting and clothing

Buttons were specific to school clothing as was the requirement to be totally independent in the toilet. These were challenging skills for the two youngest in the study, both summer born children, Cassandra and Xavier, Cassandra's mum was concerned about both these:

The only things I'm worried about for her is like doing her buttons up...and just like you know going to the toilet herself you know. (Int/17.7.18)

Xavier's mum explained that he was fine with self-care but was not yet able to do buttons which would be difficult when changing for PE and Forest School.

Self-care fine, the only thing he can't do is buttons which we're really trying on. (Int/18.7.18)

We discussed how difficult it is to teach buttoning and she commented on how they were not on many items of clothing.

So you just pull it then you've got to get it that way it's like and then he gets frustrated so I said he can at night time do it himself and practise when he's not in a rush. Everything else he can do. It's just buttons which aren't great with school shirts I was like 'Oh no'. (Int/18.7.18)

She had bought pyjamas with buttons for him to practise at home to prepare him for school. There was no discussion about his age making this more physically demanding, just a focus on teaching a required skill.

4.3.6.2 Managing self-care: eating

Children's eating was described by parents as 'fussy' or 'not fussy' and meant parents were either concerned or not about school lunch. At this time, government was providing free hot meals to all children in Reception, so almost the whole class had school lunch. For those who had attended the pre-school (Sean, Albert, Xavier and Olivia), the food was familiar, just eaten in the new location of the hall. Sean's mum was confident he would eat the food as he had *'never said he doesn't like the food'* and reiterated the idea of non-fussiness.

No he's not that fussy, he kind of just tries most things, eats a lot (Int/16.7.18)

Cassandra's mum defined her as 'fussy' at home and was hoping that school would encourage her to continue to eat, as nursery had done:

She's a bit fussy with food but she's fine at nursery and it will probably make her better, like when she's hungry she eats but she can be fussy. (Int/17.7.18)

Jim's mum said *'he's quite fussy here'* and *'doesn't eat at home'* (Int/18.7.18) although had been fine at nursery, so considered him more likely to eat at school than home. She hoped it would be fine but had talked to the cook who had given her phone number and said to text with any concerns.

This interchange was interesting. The response of the cook contrasted with that of the wider school system; she offered to make adjustments to accommodate Jim's difficulties with food in a way that was not offered in relation to the classroom. This key relationship meant that strong boundaries between home and school could be surmounted to create a different kind of interaction (Bernstein, 2000). This tiny interchange spoke of a different, more 'interactionist' model of school readiness (Meisels, 1999; Dockett and Perry, 2002) where information flowed in a bidirectional way and school made adjustments according to the needs of the child in this new environment.

4.3.6.3 Communication about self-care

Part of the transition experience for parents was the change in the amount of communication they received about their children, although unlike elsewhere (Shields, 2009) none of these parents spoke negatively about this. The challenge was implied, however, in how Olivia's mum spoke of the loss of contact with preschool staff and Cassandra's mum who said parents needed to '*assume that no news is good news*'. Interestingly the communication that Cassandra's mum mentioned related to the body; to eating and to toileting:

You go from nursery where it's 1:3 and ... they give you like a really in depth talk about their day and what they've eaten and you know even with Cass I still can't work out if she's I think she's you know wiping her own bottom and things like that whereas nursery you'd know (Int/30.10.18)

Cassandra's mum felt starting school was about parents' '*letting go*' and as a result stopped herself from emailing or writing too often. Not having a detailed verbal handover meant she was more reliant on Cassandra telling her if something was wrong and more reliant on trusting the staff to get in touch if there was an issue. Indicative of this was the fact that Cassandra lost her coat in the first few weeks and it completely disappeared. Photographing her coat in the photo tour occurred after this event and was, perhaps a way to document its continued presence.

Parent: It's like she lost her coat within the first week, it disappeared

Researcher: Oh yeah?

Parent: She's got a new one now

Researcher: Has it never come back?

Parent: No! I've got no idea (Int/30.10.18)

Cassandra's mum accepted this 'not knowing' as an inevitable part of parents' transition. This included less knowledge about their children's bodily needs in school.

4.3.6.4 Conforming to the bodily expectations of the classroom

Parents focused too on whether their children would be able to conform to the classroom's bodily expectations: holding a pencil and sitting still and listening. Parents with children already in school had noticeably clearer ideas about what it meant to be school ready as the class teacher at a parents' information evening described both gross movements and fine motor skills, in particular, ability to hold a pencil correctly. Sean's mum, for example,

commented on how his older sister had helped him to develop a '*really good*' pencil grip (Int/15.2.19). Xavier's mum had concerns about this as he sometimes lost control '*he just loses the grip on it*' and was planning to address this over the summer:

So when he's holding it I'm like 'Hold it a bit tighter and press it down on the paper' and he kind of just looks at me, so that's what we need to work on during the summer holidays I think (Int/18.7.18)

Zavier's mum had most concerns, perhaps because he was August born, physically small and she knew about Reception expectations because of Xavier's older sister. She was clear about the strong classification and framing (Bernstein, 2000) from her experience the previous year. She knew the specifics of the phonics work, for example. and expressed concerns about the academic requirements, his motivation to write and his ability to sit still, listen and concentrate.

I think girls are very academic aren't they and they want to kind of sit down and write and Xavier's just not like that. (Int/18.7.18)

Sean's mum also raised the issue of being still, saying that Sean liked to be active:

I think he is active and doesn't like to sit still very often and his grip's really good. You taught him that didn't you? (to his sister- she nods) so um the attention will be the biggest thing 'cos he'll sit for a minute or two and then wants to play football, go on his bike or something. (Int/16.7.18)

Her level of concern was much lower than Xavier's mum who discussed how trying to meet all these expectations would be exhausting for him.

So I think it will tire him out especially at the beginning 'cos I know he will try his best to be good and I think that's really gonna exhaust him, trying to stop himself from running around.(Int/18.7.18)

Her comment shows the challenge of trying to meet pedagogical requirements at a certain stage of physical development; controlling and containing his actions she felt would result in him being exhausted. She felt his older sister had been more ready for school.

I think I'm so used to his sister being very kind of academic and she was just so ready I felt like she could have gone the year before...whereas Xavier he's just very young but socially he's not but it's more (.) academically he's gonna struggle with that. (Int/18.7.18)

The two youngest in the cohort were both said to be ready socially but not necessarily academically. Cassandra's mum felt concentration would be an issue.

I think she's going to love it. I think she will struggle with certain things but I think like the concentration (Int/17.7.18)

Her response reflected a maturationist view of physical development (Gesell, 1954); she wanted Cassandra not to feel academic pressure and to be able to learn at her own pace. Her view suggested that Cassandra would grow into it as she matured.

I just want her to enjoy it not be put off by, you know, I want her to enjoy learning and I'm not going to put any pressure on her. I think they can learn at whatever pace they need to she'll learn eventually or, you know, if she needs help I just think to get used to being in a school setting, to um make friends and to enjoy it really and to get used to the hours because it's gonna be five days a week which she's never done before um (Int/17.7.18)

By contrast Xavier's mum was actively intervening to address aspects the found challenging and was concerned about his ability to cope:

Yes because boys don't really sit down and I don't think they listen as much as girls do and so then I think 'Oh is he going to get in trouble because obviously he's got to do these things 'You have to sit down Xavier, you have to listen' and his listening skills aren't great (Int/18.7.18).

Her assertion that 'obviously he's got to do these things' demonstrated her acceptance that this was how school had to operate, that Xavier needed to fit into the system and that her role was to try and teach him to achieve this. She was motivated by a concern that not being able to carry out these behaviours would lead to him being reprimanded, being distressed and thus not liking school.

Parent: And I think 'Oh gosh is he going to get into trouble and be upset because he's in trouble and I think is that going to stop him enjoying school as much. (...) So I think that's the main thing, he's quite young and it's the sitting down and listening and is he going to get in trouble and then is he not going to like going.'

Researcher: Yeah, you're wondering will it impact on how much he likes it. (Parent nods) (Int/18.7.18).

There was a short pause at this point and the silence emphasised the intensity of concern. What was absent was any idea that school could make adjustments to the requirements in some way or even that this would be discussed.

4.3.7 Parents' bodies becoming 'schooled'

As part of transition, parents were introduced to the school's expectations of where parents were and were not allowed to be physically present. They had been allowed inside the early years settings when dropping or collecting their child but were expected to stay out of the classroom. Emma talked about the physical boundaries of where parents were allowed to go.

I think the difference is, and I can fully understand why it's done in school, the door is the end of the line (Int/19.7.18)

This taken for granted change marked a different educator-parent relationship; parents were physically distanced from the classroom and their children. Emma emphasised how restricted time was in the school setting and recognised this might be a shock to parents.

Yeah and I think parents probably find it a cultural shock when they go in September because they think they're just going to waltz into the classroom and sit down with Billy-Jo for 5 minutes. (Int/19.7.18)

Teaching staff confirmed that parents were kept outside, to foster the child's independence.

Ms Grey: But then quite quickly it was like 'No, go away now, let them do it themselves' and I think that worked quite well because well they do need to do it themselves don't they independence (Int/14.2.19)

During the first session in school, I observed Jim's parents being told to pick up from the other side of the gate.

Jim's parents ask the adult 'Where do we pick up?' and teaching staff explain 'If you wait by the wooden gate by the side of the building'. Jim's parents seek to clarify saying 'In the playground?' and are told 'No the other side of the gate before you come in'. (Obs/10.9.18)

Being more physically distant was accepted by the parents in this study, however, Albert's mum spoke about how reassuring it was to see the classroom itself.

I think it made me feel a bit more at ease of knowing what was going on and going into the classroom and seeing where they're going to be and stuff like that
(Int/1.11.18)

She felt it was helpful to see where her child would physically be. She also spoke about her need to keep bringing him into the school even though parents were encouraged to use the Stop and Drop system where children were dropped at the school gate. She wanted to be physically on site with him during his Reception year and felt she was 'not really ready' to leave him at the gate. She also spoke about transgressing the boundary of the classroom to quickly pop his things into his drawer.

I haven't been told off for it, sometimes I say 'Oh I'll quickly put your stuff in your drawer so you can go and play' 'cos some mornings he's like 'I want to go out to play today' and we're always late so I'm like 'Oh quickly put your stuff in and quickly go' and I'll probably get in trouble for this, I shouldn't really do that (Int/1.11.18)

Despite the expectation that parents would move to leaving children at the school gate, some parents were not ready for this physical distance.

Expectations about how parents' bodies needed to act extended into the home. Parents were given specific advice about proximity to their children when supervising homework, a phonics sheet sent home three times a week. In contrast to school, for homework parents were encouraged to sit next to their child to supervise letter formation and colouring within the lines. Olivia's Mum, who had two older children, was resigned to time she would need for carrying out this requirement.

((Sighs)) Again um you know it'll just be an extra one for homework now. I'll get no evenings at all now, it's like uh (Int/25.10.18)

Part of the challenge for Albert's Mum was having a young baby who also needed care:

I sometimes struggle with the fact that he's screaming or doesn't want me to sit at the table but I have to sit there with him and I sometimes beat myself up about that because I feel mean. (Int/1.11.18)

She felt annoyed with herself because she found it hard to find time to sit with Albert while he completed the homework.

Oh right um I just find it a bit hard and I know that's really naughty (.) I sometimes get annoyed with myself but come home from school and he doesn't want to do it straight away (Int/1.11.18)

Albert's mum discussed this at some length referring to additional instructions for parents about supervising children's homework more closely.

Parent: I was probably one of those parents that Ms Brown put the notice up about 'Please sit with your child when they do their homework' because

Researcher: Oh I haven't seen that

Parent: Yeah 'cos some of the days, it said something like 'Can you sit with your child while they do it 'cos they need help and they've got to colour inside the lines' and I used to just do tea and be like 'You sit and do your homework' (Int/1.11.18)

Murray (2015) argues that this level of 'schoolification' impacts on the time children can experience a family pedagogy.

Parent: ... I think he [Dad] would rather sit and play with him [Albert] for half an hour than sit and do his homework

Researcher: Yeah yeah

Parent: But the night after he done it, he sat down for half an hour and I'm going 'He needs to go to bed, he needs to go to bed' 'cos on Thursday we have swimming so it's quite a hard night and he done really well, took him half an hour but he done it really really well, all in the lines (Int/1.11.18)

The teacher requiring parents to supervise children as they did their colouring inside the lines impacted on how the family could operate. It took her husband away not only from other tasks but also from playing with his child. Yet Albert's mum believed the pedagogy as set out by school and enforced through inspecting the completed sheet was beneficial for acquiring literacy skills at the required pace.

Parents were expected to be present and ensure their children's bodies engaged with the activity correctly. The children said homework was intended to make them physically stronger as Jim described during draw and talk.

Jim: We have to do homework we have to do homework to fill our muscles up to wite and weed [write and read]

Researcher: Oh right to make your muscles stronger. (15.10.18)

For Xavier it was a physical challenge to stay awake long enough to fit tea and homework in, as his mother described opening the car window to ensure he didn't fall asleep:

And I was like 'Oh gosh we've got the sound book to do, you need to eat some food' and I was thinking if he does fall asleep he's then awake well yeah, he's gone and then it takes me ages to wake him up and he gets all teary but then if he's had even 5 minutes, he's not tired at 7. So it's really hard, going home it's like 'Zavier' and I open the window. (Int/6.11.18)

These interactions surrounding homework resonate with research highlighting the 'schoolification' of children's lives (Petrie, 2005, p.294) including the home and family life (Murray, 2015). Homework impacted on family routines, interactions and also on rest time for children.

It was significant that phonics took priority in an educational landscape where the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check was now embedded in practice. The pass/fail nature of this test is high stakes for school as it is published, and this has increased the top-down pressure to achieve a certain standard in phonic knowledge by the end of Reception (Bradbury, 2018). Homework in primary years has not been shown to have a positive impact on achievement (Sharp et al., 2001; Medwell and Wray, 2019) however, teachers and parents in this study viewed it as an important part of the learning process that contributed to academic success in phonics and reading. All the parents in this study accepted homework as necessary and did not question its usefulness or that it was their responsibility to find time to complete it.

In sum, parents saw their role as preparing their children's bodies for school. They focused on self-care in terms of toileting, being able to dress and undress when wearing school uniform and eating the school hot lunch, and on meeting the classroom bodily requirements: sitting still, listening and holding a pencil correctly.

Having prepared their children, parents were themselves schooled in requirements for their own bodies; they were distanced physically and through a loss of communication, yet also given specific instructions about physical surveillance needed to supervise homework. All parents in this study were keen to adhere to the school's expectations and saw it as their responsibility to find out what those expectations were, and how to help their child make any adaptations necessary.

4.3.8 Educators preparing children's bodies for school

4.3.8.1 Early years educators

Early years educators' discussions about readying children for school centred on control and containment of bodies, to adhere to the classroom's 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.102). Many skills related to bodily control in the toilet and with clothing. They also

emphasised physical skills such as sitting still and lining up. As well as working with children in their settings, they saw it as their role to work with parents to achieve children's bodily readiness.

4.3.8.2 Working with parents to prepare children's bodies for school

In the lead up to transition, educators from both early years settings identified parents as playing a key role in preparing their children to start school. Emma explained the need to help parents understand their role in promoting independence, for example with toileting.

So it's just to try to point it out to them, and parents we do sometimes say to parents 'Ooh little Billy-Jo keeps asking but maybe you can encourage them at home because when they go to school they're going to have to do it.' And some of them just don't realise and like to molly-coddle. (Int/19.7.18)

Tess also commented that where she felt a child was not school ready, she would speak directly to parents about working on a particular aspect.

'You need to actually do this at home.' Not telling them how to bring up their children but actually guiding them saying 'We actually need to start think about him concentrating, we'll need to extend the concentration', you know that sort of thing (T/Int/30.7.18)

Together the aim was to create a child who could control their body in the school setting.

4.3.8.3 Independent self-care

The overriding priority for early years educators was self-care: toileting, washing hands and getting dressed. Karen, for instance, felt her key children were ready for the next stage because *'they're all very independent'* (Int/27.7.18) while Tess said *'independence'* was the most important thing. Tess referred to the challenge of looking after themselves in the toilet, particularly for the youngest children in the cohort.

Tess: And being independent in the bathroom (.) is a huge thing

Researcher: Yeah

Tess: I mean it's not many of them actually that I'll say that can leave here that can wipe their bum confidently it's one of those things ((Laughs)) Mind you some are just 4. (Int/30.7.18)

Jill also emphasised self-care skills but juxtaposed these with mathematics and writing too.

Jill: Toileting, dressing uum (.) and also knowing a certain amount of stuff as in a certain amount of maths, a certain amount of writing um and to be as good as we possibly can get them before they go because then when they get there it's going to be easier for them. They're not going to be continuously in small groups with lots and lots of work to bring them up to the standard. I want them at the standard.

Researcher: So they're not in intervention groups basically?

Jill: Yeah so they're already there, so they already know those phonics brilliant, tick the box, and then when they go on to the reading and learn even more phonics and the layering is like that. I then worry that I haven't quite got that to that level because maybe they're only coming one day a week and you can't not let them play you know.
(J/Int/19.7.18)

Jill highlighted a tension between adult-led literacy preparation and allowing space and time for child-led play. The school's focus on literacy and mathematics had infiltrated the early years setting. Despite this, Emma stated that self-care of personal hygiene and sitting and lining up was more important.

I mean we try to encourage it (.) I personally, and I know Jill would back me up on it, feel that if when a child goes up to school if they can count and write their name, fabulous, but more important to me is if they can sit nicely on the carpet, they can line up, they can go to the toilet, they can wipe their bottoms, sort themselves out and wash their hands which generally they can. (Int/19.7.18)

The adult to child ratios in a school setting meant that it was a priority; the children needed to be able to manage their bodies within the school space:

I think we do say sometimes Ms Brown can't wipe 33 bottoms every day.
(Int/19.7.18)

Early years staff in nursery spoke about role playing dressing up in the school uniform.

Karen: The other week I did school role-play with them

Researcher: Oh did you, what was that like?

Karen: We've got bags and stuff like the book bags and things they absolutely loved it and were like 'Look look!' when can I go to school (Laughing) Lush and they were like putting their school shoes on (Int/27.7.18)

Thus, even though some early years educators spoke of the top-down pressures of teaching children specific knowledge, they continued to prioritise independent use of the bathroom.

4.3.8.4 Preparing children's bodies for the classroom

Many preparations that early years educators undertook involved practising actions that would enable children to comply with the 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.102) of their new classroom. Tess listed a number of specific behaviours used as indicators of school readiness. Two were lining up and being able to collect and hang up their coat from a name labelled peg; these had therefore been embedded into the settings own daily routines.

Tess: We've got a little guideline that's not actually an Ofsted guideline that we use. Being able to recognise their own name. Being able to use, you know, go to their peg and get their coat off their peg. Being able to line up when called. So we're introducing this little bit more of a structured environment even though its free play we introduce the structured environment. You know being able to stop what they're doing when they're told.

Researcher: Right

Tess: Which is quite a big skill you know so if they're outside and running around and you say 'Stop', they're able to stop and listen take on board your instruction because they do that at school you know they've got playtime, they hear a bell they know they've got to line up haven't they in their certain lines (T/Int/30.7.18)

The child-led free play environment was again contrasted with the more structured school environment. Structure was defined as more adult-directed time, stopping on a signal even if it interrupted play, and interpreting that signal to indicate an action was required. This mirrored the experiences of children in the first few weeks of school as they learnt to recognise the action required at the sound of a specific bell (Foucault, 1977). Following an adult's agenda and being willing to stop their own activity was seen as an important behaviour. Compliance was used as an indication that Sean was school ready.

You haven't got to try and encourage him - come on you can do it. You can get Sean to do everything you plan to do. (K/Int/27.7.18)

Pre-school also practised certain behaviours expected in the classroom such as completing adult-led activities at a table; there was recognition that there would be less choice about participation in school.

I think it's probably a bit more formalised in the classroom. I think they do a bit more 'You will sit down and you will do this.' I know it's all integrated very slowly. I don't think they're mean to them (.) 'Sit there pin you to your table' [stern tone used for speech] but I think it's a bit more structured. (E/Int/19.7.18)

'Pin you to your table' was an interesting choice of words in relation to a 'striated' space where children are required to perform particular actions in particular ways; and 'you will sit down and you will do this' resonated with Karen's comments about Sean's compliance indicating readiness. Pre-school educators also prepared children by practising how to sit still on the carpet in a group in order to listen to a story.

Emma: But we do actually, particularly this time of year, we do use a lot of 'Let's sit nicely (.) how would you sit when you go into class when you go into class with Ms Brown?'

Researcher: Just to get used to it?

Emma: And I know the little ones are there as well, but they're all going to end up there so it doesn't hurt to start early but we are very aware, at carpet time I'll have (.) somebody will be reading a story and leading it (either myself or Jill or Linda) but then normally I'll have at least one member of staff sat there so when the 2 year olds wander off, they can either wander off with them or try and get them to stay. But I don't force them to stay at 2. We all know the children and if we tried to force them that're just going to scream and kick and disrupt everybody. They want to go and play generally so let them go and play. (Int/19.7.18)

There was pressure to prepare children to sit quietly on the carpet whilst also meeting the needs of younger children, aged 2, who may be present. The balance between work and play was again emphasised with a tension between 'it doesn't hurt to start early' juxtaposed with the idea of children who will 'scream and kick' to be allowed to move freely and play.

Sitting still, a key requirement on the body foregrounded in the children's data, was also commented on by Jill who had concerns about children who found this difficult.

Jill: He goes for a wee, gets his drink continually

Researcher: Ok so that he can move?

Jill: So that he can move and he wants toys but they're only little and Ms Brown's pretty good

Researcher: Yep yep

Jill: As you are but I'm worried they'll get in trouble I mean we'll have a word with Ms Brown say just (.)

Researcher: Yes?

Jill: They are fine, they are very young (Int/19.7.18)

Jill's view tended towards the 'maturationist' view of physical development (Gesell, 1954) describing children as '*only little*' and identifying that the physical demands in relation to their age might make sitting challenging in their bodily adaptation to the school environment.

Part of early years educators' experience of transition was ensuring the children in their care were prepared to the standard required by the receiving school. Jill used feedback from the school to assess how successful their preparation had been.

We've always got feedback from everyone that ummmm ours are good kids going up and they do know how to line up, they do know how to go to the toilet, wash their hands and all that so yeah and they do know how to sit on the carpet at certain times um so yes we do get good feedback that they are doing well sending them up.
(Int/19.7.18)

The use of the phrase '*good kids*' was associated here with acquiring the compliant behaviours of the school child: lining up, toileting, washing hands and sitting still. Part of the induction into school seemed to be about learning who has the power; that children had less choice in this space (Foucault, 1977). Overall, the relationship between school and early years settings was unidirectional in terms of school setting out their expectations of what children needed to be able to do to be 'school ready'. The school's views had influenced the mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006); they had communicated the requirements to early years settings through visits and communicated them to parents through parents' information evenings.

4.3.8.5 Teaching staff

Teaching staff were focused on the same behaviours and knowledge which they expected from children considered ready for school. The power that school had to take the lead on the transition was clear; their views on what it meant to be 'school ready' were strongly framed (Bernstein, 2000) in their discussions with others in the mesosystem. Teaching staff spoke about independent self-care and adhering to the expectations of the classroom. Ms White, for example, focused on routines and being able to get changed.

Researcher: So what do you think the most important things are then for them to learn?

Ms White: Lining up, toileting, um and then being able to, not that I do PE, but getting dressed, being able to put their coats on.

Researcher: Yes

Ms White: Putting their shoes on, things like that. (Int/27.2.19)

Ms Grey also emphasised independence in self-care routines of toileting and dressing.

Er well you need to be able to go to the toilet and wipe your bottom and um you should ideally be able to dress yourself and undress yourself um put your coat on (Int/14.2.18)

She discussed the idea of needing experience of following rules set by someone other than parents at home.

And I suppose they need, it'd be helpful if they had some idea of following rules, not um (.) school is different from home but also I suppose they need to understand that your mum or whoever looks after you isn't the only person that can tell you what you should be doing. (Int/14.2.18)

Her discussion suggested that children needed to learn that it would not just be adults at home that instructed them, but also adults in school.

Ms Brown viewed being school ready as an absolute; that it entailed mastery of specific skills and behaviours defined as necessary, expressing an 'empiricist approach' (Meisels, 1999). In addition, she explained children needed these to be successful in their learning, that they were time sensitive and should be taught primarily by early years settings. She split her response into what she referred to as the 'textbook' answer which meant being independent and confident as opposed to her own additional preferences which meant curriculum or 'official knowledge' (Bernstein, 2000, p.65). Deciding what needed to be learnt and in what sequence illustrated the strong classification and framing of this setting.

Ms Brown: So to be 'school ready' you want them to be confident and be able to concentrate on an activity for a length of time, 5-10 minutes ((In overlap Researcher: OK)) and ideally be within the 30- 50 months in most areas of learning

Researcher: Right

Ms Brown: In particular with their physical development

Researcher: Right

Ms Brown: Uuum and their fine motor skills holding a pencil in tripod grip will give them a great start.

Researcher: Yep

*Ms Brown: Be able to look after themselves personally so doing own coat putting their things away, using the toilet independently, washing their hands, maintaining hygiene. That's kind of text book and then **I personally** would like it if they recognised their numbers to 10*

Researcher: Yep

Ms Brown: And recognised their name (Int/17.9.18)

'Physical development' involved controlling the body as parents and early years educators had described: toileting, washing hands, collecting, hanging up and being able to put on a coat and a pencil grip for writing. These skills were required before children began school so they could be introduced to staff, the space, the resources and the routines governing it.

As with other participant groups, Ms Brown introduced the term 'school ready' without prompting.

Researcher: What is your role in preparing children for transition then?

Ms Brown: To make them feel completely comfortable with the environment and with the staff um and to make sure they are 'school ready' so to work with the other settings to make sure they're school ready and if we can familiarise them with any routines and resources that we use (Int/17.9.18)

Referring to 'work with the other settings' meant that Ms Brown had visited settings to explain expectations such as the need for a tripod pencil grip as well as implementing specific programmes and training around phonics and mathematics. Her view was that these skills could be in place before children began school if the environment was suitable. Ms Brown emphasised the role of early years settings to prepare children so that they would be ready to function in the classroom. The school's role was to receive school ready children and introduce them to the school's new environment and expectations. In essence, the body should be ready to receive the teaching.

Teachers had specific targets to achieve by the end of the Reception school year. These were published with the Year 1 PSC and Year 2 SATs. Ms Brown explained that with the change in curriculum content and expectations in maths, the children had to achieve now what was once a Key Stage 1 target, and she needed them further on at the start of Reception to achieve this standard. In this way the policy context for England underpinned her focus and directly impacted her pedagogical approach (Bradbury and Roberts-Holmes, 2018) – and in turn, children’s embodied experiences. The previous year some children had arrived not being able to distinguish between a letter and a numeral or how to count accurately and she explained that this meant ‘it’s **such a long way to go**’. Her concept of what it meant for a child to be ready for school was informed directly by the academic standard the children were expected to achieve by the end of the year and indeed her own professional development appraisal would look at this explicitly.

The staggered entry process outlined in Figure 9 was therefore designed to allow children’s bodies to adjust to the new requirements, as well as being time efficient; four weeks in which to transition children into school.

Ms Grey focused on how it helped the children as smaller numbers made it less daunting.

Which I thought was good because it's probably a bit overwhelming for little ones coming in and there being 30 of them. (MsG/Int/14.2.18)

Ms White felt it was an improvement on previous systems as you could get to know individual children more effectively.

I like it how we do the um morning children then afternoon children then the following week swap (Int/27.2.18)

Ms Brown’s emphasis was on the opportunities it offered to ‘train’ children, with only half the class present.

Ms Brown: ... I think it works perfectly now. Um I think it gives enough time for, and it's probably more about the adults in the setting, it's enough time to spend with the children to train them and teach them the rules and the boundaries.

Researcher: Right.

Ms Brown: For us to get to know the children really well rather than having 30 and you don't get to know them so well because actually you are just managing 30 children. So we get to know them well, they get to know the routines and boundaries really well (Int/17.9.18)

The specialised nature of school was emphasised here with the need to teach children to 'recognise' and then 'realise' the particular requirements in this setting (Bernstein, 2000, p.17). She also referred to building relationships with the children over the four-week period, and how working in this way helped to ensure that children generally did not cry to come to school.

Ms Brown: ... I do want to get to know the children so it's 4 weeks before they are full time and it works well. We don't have anybody crying when they come in uuum and then we can start the learning after the fourth week properly because everybody knows the expectations. (Int/17.9.18)

The purpose of the staggered entry to 'train' the children resonated with Foucault's ideas of training in order to achieve a controllable 'docile body' (1977) that was able to carry out the regulative routines required in the classroom (Bernstein, 2000). Ms Brown also referred to building relationships with children while there were smaller numbers so that they could get to know the 'rules and boundaries' during this time. Closer scrutiny of the minutiae of behaviour was possible whilst fewer children were attending ensuring that the children understood and complied with the rules set out explicitly. Building relationships also helped to support and contain children's emotions. Although emotions were not referred to often by the teaching staff, separating from parents at the start of a session was referred to Ms White who saw it as her role to provide support if needed.

When it's coming in of a morning and Ms Brown's talking to another parent or something I obviously take the crier (.) it's normally me taking the criers off but when they first come in showing them their trays and pegs we do it together. Then eventually they just come to me anyway they just leave them with me. (Int/27.2.18)

'Taking the criers off' demonstrated her awareness of some children's difficulty with separating from parents in the mornings and the need for them to have support to contain these emotions and achieve that separation. Her use of language was distancing, however, and the focus was on containing the outbursts so as not to disturb the business of the classroom: the register and the start of lessons.

Ms White: But then I can remember that with my child. She was Mrs Y's shadow and if she wouldn't have been in there it would have been (.)

Researcher: So in terms of the transition that's an important role then

Ms White: Mmm and It's nice then that they feel they can like they feel safe with you and they trust you and you're going to look after them. (MsW/Int/27.2.18)

Ms White focused on the emotional support needed at the start of the day recollecting that her own child had needed this. She emphasised the importance of an emotional attachment within the classroom, to create a trusting relationship to help a child to feel safe.

Bernstein (2000, p.102) argues that 'instructional discourse' is embedded in the 'regulative discourse' (Section 2.2.1) which resonates here with the programme of staggered entry. The goal with training children through the staggered entry process was to create 'schoolled' bodies ready to '*start the learning*', learning which was seen to be impeded if the bodily expectations had not been properly understood and complied with.

In light of the embodied experience of children described at the start of this section, adhering to these bodily requirements created a pressure to comply with and be seen to be complying with a great many practices in the first few weeks of attending school. The following section explores how the challenge of meeting those demands impacted on children's bodies.

4.4 Bodies reacting

This section explores children's bodily reactions to the experience of starting school. Data for this sub theme focus on emotions which were fleetingly evident through body posture, movement or eruptions of laughter. Much of what was communicated was through observing and interpreting children's physical movements as well as paying attention to the impact of their responses on myself. Fatigue was also included as a key bodily reaction experienced by children in these first few weeks of school.

Adults' data were also used to explore the physical impact of school on children in two key areas; tiredness and hunger. There was data relating to the emotional reactions of adults to the start to school (Section 3.7.3.3), however, I have foregrounded the experiences directly impacting on children's bodies.

4.4.1 Anxious/unsure

Bodily reactions were evident in moments where children tried to adjust their behaviour to comply with the expectations of being a school child. Cassandra's blushing and looking towards me for reassurance during carpet time was such an example, as was Jim's deep breathing as he sought to control his anxiety during his first lunchtime meal. They were both intent on being a 'body-in-place' (Rossholt, 2012) to conform with the expectations; they chose to exercise their agency, trying to comply with expectations they found physically challenging. Both interactions had a profound and intense bodily impact on me despite their fleeting nature. Paying attention to these micro-moments contributed to a deeper understanding of children's experiences.

Close observation of children's non-verbal cues and behaviours is standard early years practice and was embedded in the Reception class. However, the focus was mainly on EYFS learning objectives (DfE, 2017b) rather than on gaining a deeper understanding of emotional experience. In the induction and first few sessions of school, close observation was significant in understanding and therefore responding appropriately to children such as Olivia, Sean and Albert who were anxious or unsure at the start of the day. Olivia needed to transfer her touch from her mum to me in order to come into the classroom and Sean was a 'bit shy' according to his mum as he entered the classroom for the first time; this was also evident in my observation.

Sean comes into the classroom leaning his head towards his mum, his fingers are near to his mouth and he looks unsure about what to do next. His mum points out the dinosaurs on the table and duplo on the carpet. She takes him to the duplo on the carpet and he sits down. He starts joining bricks together. When Xavier arrives he smiles and they begin to play together. (Obs/25.6.18)

Albert needed the chance to observe the play around him before he felt comfortable enough to engage in activities during his induction session.

He looked at a brick, picked it up then looked around. Appeared nervous, not smiling. He watched the other children then started to pick up another brick and built a tower. Later in the same 45 minute session, Ms White asked him if he wanted to do a painting. He nodded and painted one at the easel. He did not talk to anyone and kept looking around him. (Obs/26.6.18)

At his first session attending school he remained unsure:

He is not smiling or speaking. Mum says 'I've never known him so quiet.'
(Obs/10.9.18)

Children reacted to the unfamiliarity of spaces and activities encountered in school, but also demonstrated how they wanted to meet expectations placed on them in their new environment.

4.4.2 Laughter

Eruptions of laughter were observed at times when children were moving in less structured ways including in 'smoother' spaces. There were also times when laughter appeared to be as a result of transgressing rules.

Three instances were from observations in pre-school or nursery such as when Cassandra was showing me how she could balance on a log and nearly fell off.

Cassandra sees me and comes over. She takes my hand saying 'Come and see this.' She takes me to the log area and shows me how she can balance on the logs. She wobbles and nearly falls off 'Woah!' she says and laughs. (Obs/12.7.18)

Her laughter could simply be one of surprise yet reflecting on the role that laughter can play in developing social interactions (Glenn, 2003), she also could have been inviting me to join her in this laughter as she got to know me. In the same setting, Jim 'was *shrieking with laughter*' as he threw cups and buckets of water over Tess when I arrived to talk to him about his recent induction session, clearly enjoying the connection with his key person and the feel of sensation of the water. In pre-school Xavier was also observed laughing socially; he pretended that the plastic fruit was real as he played with his friends. The laughter here appeared to relate to the incongruity of licking a piece of artificial fruit.

Xavier is in the book corner. He licks a plastic kiwi fruit and says 'I just licking it!' and laughs. There are 3 other children in the book corner and they laugh too. (Obs/19.7.18)

Laughter was also observed in school at times when the children were transgressing boundaries in some way or enjoying the 'smoother' spaces. For example, as discussed in the previous section, Xavier and Olivia were observed walking round and round the classroom with Olivia following Xavier. They walked faster and faster laughing as they did. They seemed to experience a joy from moving in this way, relating and connecting to each other in a line of flight that was almost a chase. When stopped, they went to complete an activity together. The other episodes of laughter occurred in the 'smoother' spaces created for the photo tours and draw and talk sessions. Cassandra laughed when moving around the hall, asking me 'Can you do this?' and leaping about in a way that would not be allowed at lunchtime for example. She also laughed with Sean as she took a photo of his feet.

Whilst in a draw and talk session, Olivia laughed when telling me her brother said funny things at home to express his dislike of bananas.

Olivia: And Elijah [brother] said 'Poo poo nanas at home

Researcher: ((laughs)) Who said that?

Olivia: Elijah her said 'They're stinky'

Researcher: 'Cos he likes apples instead?

Olivia: Yeah ((laughs)) (15.10.18)

This clearly represented a transgression of boundaries in terms of language that would normally not be allowed in school but which she felt she could retell in this space.

4.4.3 Tiredness

A key bodily reaction to the adjustments being made during this transition period was fatigue. Service, a strongly striated space, showed children experiencing fatigue as they attempted to maintain their sitting positions as bodies-in-place (Rossholt, 2012). Towards the end of service once the candle had been snuffed out and they had been sitting for about 20 minutes, all six became more restless (Section 4.3.3). At this point the hall was very hot. The physical demands of sitting still and attending to an adult in a hot and highly striated environment was a challenging physical requirement for these four-year-olds (Goddard-Blythe, 2004). Two of the buddies tried to encourage the children; Xavier's buddy tapped him on the arm and whispered to sit up, which he did. However, Cassandra did not respond when her buddy shook her head and demonstrated an upright sitting position. The fatigue became more evident as four of the children stretched, moved and yawned. For example, Sean yawned and was very white whilst Jim tipped backwards and arched his back. Xavier moved more: tucking his hands under his shoes and pulling his legs, stretching his legs out in front and leaning backwards, lifting his knees up then shuffling back with straight legs in front, then starting to lie down. Cassandra also moved restlessly by yawning, wagging her hands, leaning forwards to put her elbows on the floor and covering her mouth with her hands. She then tipped forward onto her knees before rocking back with her finger in her mouth. Xavier's glazed and unfocused eyes as he stood in the line, not noticing when the others walked off, further supports the idea of fatigue. I also observed the physical demands of sitting still at the end of the first full day in school, when Cassandra actually fell asleep.

At carpet time, Cassandra sat on the carpet with her rucksack on. During the story she went very white and then swayed backwards as her eyes shut. She startled awake as she fell backwards and sat up shaking her head. Her eyes then started to droop again and Ms Brown asked an adult to sit behind her to check she was OK. (Obs/1.10.18)

An 'ethic of care' (Taggart, 2016, p.174) was relevant here as paying attention to children's bodily reactions during transition enabled a deeper understanding of how their encounters were impacting on them and therefore how we might respond compassionately. In the moment, action was taken by adults, for instance, to support Cassandra as she fell asleep. However, these bodily reactions could also be examined more critically to develop a wider

understanding of how structures and practices could be adapted to meet the needs of the children.

Of the six parents, four commented on how tired, drained or exhausted their children were: Sean, Albert, Cassandra and Xavier. At the start of the second session of school Sean's mum commented to Ms Brown:

'He's so tired! It's strange because he was doing 8- 6 at the nursery and it's only 3 hours here but he's shattered!' (Obs/11.9.18)

It was interesting to note that although the hours were considerably less, the levels of tiredness were significant enough for her to notice and comment on it. Tiredness was referred to again during the second interviews with parents. The interviews took place after children had been attending school fulltime for at least four weeks. For instance, Albert's mum discussed how tired he was by the last week before half term.

Parent: Yeah 'cos the last week he was absolutely knackered

Researcher: Yeah yeah

Parent: He was like come out of school and he was drained and I had to like try and get him to keep him going (Int/1.11.18)

The level of fatigue was not viewed as impacting on their enjoyment of school or their desire to be there, but rather interpreted as an inevitable part of necessary physical adjustments as they started school. Sean's mum said he wanted to stay for whole days although it tired him.

Yeah I think he did well. I think he was very tired, suddenly going for the whole day but actually on the half days he was wanting to stay for the whole day. (Int/15.2.19)

Cassandra's mum said that she was really enjoying school but was tired, particularly by the evening.

she's quite emotional but she's never once said she hasn't wanted to go
(Int/30.10.18)

However it had not impacted on the time she went to sleep in the evenings or how early she got up.

Parent: I know I know she goes a bit and she's not a brilliant, she's not too bad, she's not the best sleeper so sometimes she gets up really early and she comes home exhausted and still won't go to sleep until 8 o'clock.

Researcher: Yeah yeah

Parent: And their brains are whirling

Researcher: That's true I hadn't thought of that, they've got a lot to process
(Int/30.10.18)

The issue with sleeping was seen as situated within the individual child; she was '*not the best sleeper*' and would not make adjustments to go to sleep any earlier to compensate for her tiredness. Xavier's mum also emphasised that he had had a positive start to school although he too was extremely tired.

Parent: Absolutely fine, the only downside is that he's knackered, he's absolutely shattered so after school is, I wouldn't say it's hard work but I have to tread on egg shells a bit because he is just so emotional.

Researcher: Yeah?

Parent: He's so tired, so tired (Int/6.11.18)

To manage this, he had sometimes gone to bed earlier, however the knock-on effect of this was an early morning.

So he'll still go to bed the same time, sometimes he has been going to bed a bit earlier which I did try a few times but then he was getting up about half five, quarter to six and I was like by the time he's going to school he's going to be knackered!
(Int/6.11.18)

For this reason, she had been looking forward to the end of term.

I just couldn't wait for the end of term because he was so tired and I was like, if it wasn't I'd probably have to take him out of school for a week because he got to the point where I'd him in the car and just from here home he was literally asleep.
(Int/6.11.18)

She chose to make adjustments to make sure he did not have any after school activities so that he could rest, try to stay awake long enough to eat, and complete his homework before going to bed at 7.

Parent: It's hard 'cos you want them to rest but not sleep

Researcher: Yes exactly

Parent: And it's like 'Oh' and I got to the point where I thought I'm not doing anything with him after school because he's knackered

Researcher: Yeah

Parent: So we come back and do bits and bobs and then he's like 'Can I watch telly' 'Course you can' (Int/6.11.18)

Zavier's Mum referred to how she had to keep an ear out so that he did not accidentally fall asleep before his tea.

But then I was making dinner and I hadn't heard him and I would walk in and he would be like (mimes falling asleep) and I'd go 'Zavier!' and he'd go (mimes waking up) 'I'm not sleeping, I'm not sleeping'.

((Both laugh))

I'm hoping it'll kind of, that'll get better but apart from that that's the only thing, just that he's tired. (Int/6.11.18)

Parents were prepared to make adjustments within the home and family to support their children to meet the requirements being placed on them by the school system.

4.4.4 Hunger

Hunger was the other key bodily reaction to starting school referred to by four of the parents: Jim, Xavier, Cassandra and Albert. Albert came out of school 'absolutely ravenous' even though he was eating hot lunches.

Parent: He just wants to eat the house

Researcher: It's funny isn't it

Parent: I think 'You've had a cooked dinner, how are you even hungry?' but he is and I think if he had a pack up he'd be even more hungry (Int/1.11.18)

Zavier's mum said the same.

He was starving. He had a massive meal and then he was still 'I'm hungry. I'm hungry, I'm hungry. Can I have some more fruit' and I was like 'OK' and I went in and I said 'What apple's that' and he said 'My second apple and a banana' 'And you've had your raspberries and strawberries?' 'Yeah' (Int/30.10.18)

For children that were struggling to eat at lunchtime, this was even more marked. Jim snacked a lot after school as he was so hungry, and mum had moved mealtimes to accommodate this. She was however planning to work with the cook to have particular food available so that he could eat more at lunchtime.

Parent: ... I've brought forward dinner to half 4 but then he's after that he's eating crisps, he's eating cookies trying to (.) he literally does not stop eating from the time he gets home

Researcher: Right

Parent: He's never been a big snacker and a big he doesn't so we're going to go through the menu and give it to the cook aren't we and she's going to give you stuff (Int/1.11.18)

Not every parent knew how eating was going; Cassandra hadn't spoken about her food and mum was not aware that if there was a problem it would be written in the communication book. She had been told that Cassandra was going very white at school and saying she was hungry in the mornings and so, in consultation with the teaching staff, planned to change her breakfast to try and keep her fuller for longer.

Parent: Instead of cereal we're going to give her a fried egg sandwich (.) she loves it, two eggs and she loves it 'cos otherwise she'll have a bowl of rice krispies and loads of it goes over the table (Int/30.10.18)

She saw it as her responsibility to provide enough to meet the requirement to last until snack time rather than asking for her to be given an additional snack part way through the morning. Snack time was an area where home was expected to meet the requirements of school and therefore provided insight into the relationship between home and school. The rules for snack time were defined by the school's healthy eating policy which stated that children would only be allowed fruit or vegetables. This was provided for free in Reception, Year 1 and 2 by the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme (SFVS) funded by central government; however, parents were allowed to send some in if they wanted. Albert's mum chose to provide this and to allow Albert to choose what he wanted.

Eating was strongly classified and framed by teachers (Bernstein, 2000) in these first few weeks. What children ate, how and when was tightly controlled and was kept under close surveillance to ensure eating conformed to the rules. This 'microscope of conduct' (Foucault, 1977, p.174) was evident when Albert's mum had been advised not to send in too much fruit.

Her response to this was to blame herself for not having met the requirements closely enough and she sought to clarify what she should do.

Parent: But the snack's fine because he (.) I always ask him what he wants and he always has strawberries or apple or grapes, I let him choose. And one day he wanted strawberries and I'd already cut the apple up so I just cut a few strawberries and then Ms Brown said 'Could we only have one snack'

Researcher: One snack? Oh right.

Parent: It was my fault 'cos I'd given him a bit of apple and a bit of strawberry 'cos I'd already made the apple and it'd have gone funny, it would have gone brown so I was 'Oh just have both and don't eat what you don't want, it doesn't matter' but I don't know if they have to eat it all, I'm not sure (Int/1.11.18)

At playtime children were asked to sit and eat their snack first before playing and staff closely observed this was carried out in the first few weeks. This impacted Albert's request for his snack.

He said to me 'Can I only have 3 grapes' and I said '3s not going to fill you up, have a few more' (Int/1.11.18)

Again understanding the specific snack set-up was challenging for parents new to school.

So can he still eat school snacks as well if he's hungry? (Int/1.11.18)

She was keen to know the specifics of what he could and could not eat and to check whether he would be allowed access to food if hungry. Meeting their child's physical needs was negotiated by the parents as they tried to ascertain what they should or should not provide for their children to eat. There was also a recognition and an acceptance that they were not in control of what their child would be allowed to consume; this decision had passed on to the school. Parents' comments concerning their children's levels of tiredness and hunger resonated with observations and conversations with children during their first few weeks in school. Children worked to make physical adjustments in school and parents worked to make adjustments at home that impacted upon the whole family. Part of the physical experience of children transitioning into school, therefore, was the experience of coping with tiredness and hunger.

Children's bodies reacted physically to the adjustments they were required to make as they started school. As well as some positive emotions such as laughter as they began to build relationships, they experienced feelings of uncertainty. The 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein,

2000) of the classroom, influenced by a formal pedagogical approach, placed demands on the children that were physically challenging given their age and stage of physical development: sitting still for prolonged periods of time and controlling their urges in relation to toileting and eating. The consequence of close surveillance (Foucault, 1977) enforcing compliance in these strongly striated spaces (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) meant that children experienced tiredness and hunger. Parents commented on these two physical experiences and on adjustments made at home to mitigate both these. Support was given by adults in school and at home to children as they experienced these reactions to meeting the demands of school; however no mention was made of changes to wider systems and practices.

4.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has focused on four different facets of children's embodied experiences of starting school. *Multi-sensory bodies* explored the sensory entanglements children experienced as they entered the microsystem of the classroom for the first time. The strong classification and framing of the setting (Bernstein, 2000) influenced these entanglements which impacted on children's bodies (Foucault, 1977). *Bodies encountering objects* focused on the assemblages between children and non-human matter in a 'more-than-human' approach (Lupton, 2019) that recognised the agential nature of the material world. Objects carried meaning about how children were positioned in this new microsystem, were sometimes confusing given the specialised nature of the school context (Bernstein, 2000) and also at times disempowering given the size and developmental stage of children's bodies. Both these subthemes highlighted the importance of integrating theories from new materialism to explore children's embodied experiences further within the bioecological model.

Bodies becoming 'schooled' considered key striated spaces (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) where teaching staff taught children how to embody the image of a school child through disciplinary practices, particularly through surveillance and correction of the body (Foucault, 1977). Adults' data were examined to illustrate how the school readiness agenda focused on readying children's bodies for the curriculum and 'regulative discourse' of the school (Bernstein, 2000, p.102). Interviews with parents and early years educators illustrated the impact on the mesosystem with school staff communicating what they required of the other participants. *Bodies reacting* identified the impact of starting school on children's bodies focusing on micro moments (blushing, deep breathing) as well as tiredness and hunger. Chapter 5 discusses these issues further in relation to existing literature and to the integrated theoretical framework.

Chapter 5 Integration and Discussion

This chapter explores key findings from the data in relation to existing literature and to the adapted bioecological model discussed in Chapter 2 and visualised in Figure 3.

This study aimed to examine the experiences of children as they started school in England where they are among the youngest worldwide to begin formal schooling. Conceptualising the transition ecologically my overarching research question was:

How do children experience the transition into school in the context of their families and educators?

Led by analysis of the children's data in particular, as well as a review of the literature, I narrowed the focus of the thesis to the embodied experience of children starting school:

1.1 What is the embodied experience of children as they transition into a Reception class?

1.2 How do parents and teachers/educators describe this embodied transition?

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 address the research questions by integrating findings for the embodied individual, the material world, and how adults act on children's bodies to school them.

5.1 Multi-sensory bodies and bodies encountering objects

The first core finding was that these young children experienced the new space of school in a vivid, intense multi-sensory way (Section 4.1). Sounds, smells, textures and tastes enveloped them, micro-geographies that impacted on their lived experience of starting school. Whilst some sensations were pleasant, such as the smell of flowers or handwash, others caused discomfort: wearing collared shirts and ties, loud bells and eating a certain amount of food all impacted on their experience of this new environment, affecting their transition.

Literature in children's geographies concurs with the view of multi-sensory experiences as important, arguing for the need to examine everyday bodily interactions for deeper insight into children's lived experiences (Horton and Kraftl, 2006). Research with pre-school children identified the importance of embodied experiences such as smells and textures, recognising these can promote or hinder participation and enjoyment of a setting (Horton and Kraftl, 2011).

Children starting school are learning what it means to be a school child. Many school activities and practices are so longstanding that their purpose and impact are not

questioned. Yet paying attention to children's sensory experiences raised questions about the importance of maintaining these. For example, a uniform with a buttoned shirt and tie poses a sensory challenge to many young children, not just those with diagnosed sensory processing issues. Each year there are children who struggle to fasten the buttons of their shirt, particularly those who are younger, have less experience with buttons and those who have physical difficulties.

A key finding is the importance of children's encounters with objects in this transition period (Section 4.2). Non-human matter influenced their experience as they came to understand the meanings objects carried within the specialised school context (Bernstein, 2000). Chairs were children's most photographed object and comments made by the children indicated their growing understanding of messages about when they were and were not allowed to sit on them; a positioning decided by adults. Objects also mediated events specific to school; to understand what the object was and how it should be used was to enter into a deeper understanding of the 'regulative discourse' of the school (Bernstein, 2000, p.102). Children's physical size and strength as they started school meant that some everyday objects were disempowering and hindered their sense of autonomy and control (Section 4.2.3).

The bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) conceptualises the microsystem as containing the developing individual, the child, who interacts with people and objects/symbols over time. The model acknowledges everyday interactions with objects as well as humans. However, as discussed in Section 2.3, the main focus is on human relationships. Yet the original findings of this study foreground the material world. Incorporating concepts from new materialism allows for a broader view of 'objects' and their relationship with humans within the microsystem. Proximal processes therefore can be viewed as encompassing 'assemblages' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.2) of humans, objects and the rest of the material world. A more multi-dimensional conceptualisation of the embodied child incorporates intra-acting with other human bodies and, crucially, also objects and spaces. Going beyond the bioecological model's definition, 'objects' include everyday objects rather than focusing on educational resources chosen for children's educational development (Section 2.3).

The findings therefore challenge the adequacy of the bioecological model as visualised by Tudge (2008) in Figure 2, which depicts the elements of 'Child' 'People' 'Objects' 'Symbols' as separate units. New materialism dissolves these boundaries, envisaging the embodied individual encountering other humans and non-human matter in a series of ever-changing assemblages. A contribution of this study, then, is to suggest that the bioecological model needs to be reimagined to include the embodied nature of the individual, and dynamic

relations between the individual and the material world as they influence and are influenced by each other.

Lenz Taguchi (2010) has argued that objects have influence on humans and that this interaction has largely been overlooked in favour of human-human entanglements. In transition research, objects such as the teacher's chair, the whiteboard, toilets and water fountains have been mentioned (Dockett and Perry, 2005a; O'Rourke et al., 2017). This study builds and expands on these findings but found that, rather than being peripheral, entanglements with the material world were central to children's embodied experience of starting school. In Section 4.2.3, multiple everyday objects were found to be disempowering: children's physical size and strength on entering school created difficulties for some when trying to reach shelves, use a large toilet, reach flushes on toilets, push handwash dispensers and turn on taps.

Research focused on materialities resonates with these findings. For example, Clark and Nordtomme (2019) argue for more attention to be paid to interactions between children and the objects around them while Hansen et al. (2017) showed how everyday objects used during lunchtime influenced children's experiences. The way that objects carry meaning and also convey that meaning to those around them is explored by Jones (2013) as she discusses the entanglement of the carpet space, the teacher's chair and the requirement to sit on the carpet around this chair communicates messages about power relations.

Concepts in new materialism see the material world as carrying meanings which influence and shape the individual as much as the individual shapes them (Hultman and Lenz Taguchi, 2010, Kind, 2014). Agency is therefore relational and distributed between human and non-human matter. Taking a 'more-than-human' approach allows the examination of these forces on the lived experience of the individual. The drawing in Figure 35 visualises an assemblage during service where the child, teacher, chair, hall floor and messages contained in the positioning of children and adults are all intra-acting together. Rather than being discrete, bounded objects, every part of the assemblage interconnects, shown by the red lines and the openings in the outline of each entity. Intra-actions and meanings carried by the objects are shown in the green shaded bubbles. For example, there is an intra-action between the child and the temperature of the floor and their understanding that they could not use the chairs at this time.

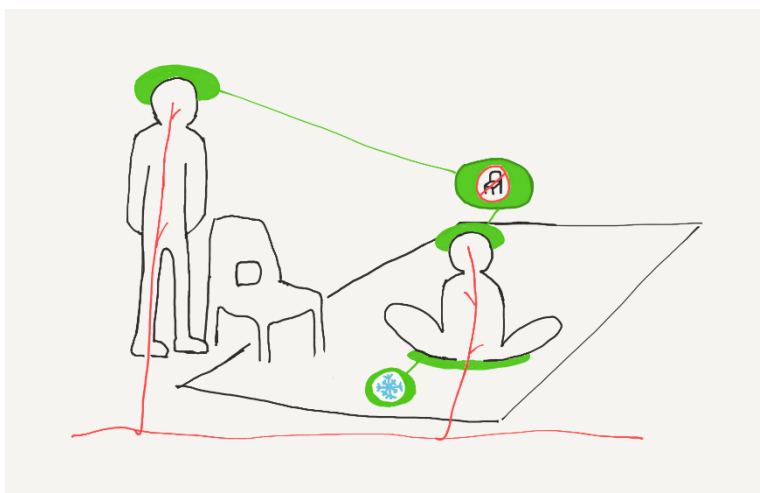


Figure 35 - Visualising an assemblage of person-object-people (inspired by Ngui, 2004)

The majority of children starting school in England are four (Rogers and Rose, 2007). Physical growth differs among individuals (Doherty and Hughes, 2009) and the environment needs to be appropriate to meet the needs of all children starting school including the youngest and smallest. Where it does not, as this study has shown, children can feel disempowered and reliant on others to support them in essential self-care tasks.

Children faced repeated challenges throughout the day to overcome entanglements with the material world, for example, the feel of their uniform, or sitting still on a floor or carpet for prolonged periods of time. Responses varied as individuals had their own 'Person' characteristics. All six children exhibited 'generative force characteristics' (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, p.810) in that they all actively tried to adhere to the microsystem's expectations and overcome their individual difficulties. Although adults supported children in the moment to master objects such as bathroom taps, they expected children to adapt rather than considering adapting the environment (Section 4.2.3). The environment was treated as fixed and unyielding despite the developmental challenges that children experienced within it. This implies an 'empiricist' view of school readiness where children are made ready for school instead of an 'interactionist' approach where the environment could be altered to meet their needs (Meisels, 1999). These small encounters of the everyday, the taken for granted, speak to a wider issue about school processes which may be seen as insignificant, but can affect children's sense of well-being and their view of themselves as a successful school child, who is equal to this new setting.

Sensory entanglements experienced by the children, and assemblages of child and non-human matter, were often overlooked by adults (See Sections 4.1 and 4.2). Not only were adults already familiar with the sounds and smells of school, but they did not engage in many sensory experiences at all. Children's material experiences therefore differed substantially from adults'.

The material world encountered by children in this study was constructed by adults. The recognition and acknowledgement of power relations needs to be more explicit within the bioecological model as the material world within the school microsystem was constructed by exosystems through policies which influence school practices, objects and spaces. Bernstein's classification and framing (2000) illuminates these power relations; within the specialised context of 'school' categories such as home/school; teacher/pupil can be more or less strongly classified and framed. In this study, school was a strongly classified microsystem with strong insulation between categories. Uniform clothing was one way home and school were insulated. Framing in school was strong; clothes had to be worn in particular ways; shirts had to be tucked in and ties tucked into jumpers. One embodied experience for the children therefore was transitioning from the weakly classified clothing requirements of their early years setting to the strongly classified experience in school. Children experienced intra-action (Lenz Taguchi, 2010) between clothing and their bodies as constraining and uncomfortable, compared with the freedom of choice they had experienced in their early years settings. This was particularly evident during the 'Water extravaganza' in nursery where all the children were wearing swimming costumes and children and adults were throwing water at one another. As well as a weaker classification between nursery and home clothing, there was also a blurring of the insulation between the 'category relations' of educator and child (Bernstein, 2000, p.99) in the way that hoses and water were being used and who was allowed to throw water over whom.

For children starting school, the materialities of the everyday impacted on their lived transition experience. The following section considers practices which schooled children's bodies, and the impact of this.

5.2 Schooled bodies and bodies reacting

Bodies becoming 'schooled' and *Bodies reacting* further explored children's embodied experiences as they start school, drawing on findings from all participants' data; children, parents, educators in early years settings and teachers in school.

A key finding was that children's bodies were 'schooled' by all adults involved in the transition process, before and during the start to school. The process of acting on the body was part of children's lived experience and also a salient part of the experience for the adults. Prior to school start, early years educators and Reception teaching staff focused on the need for children's bodies to be prepared, to be made ready (Section 4.3.8) with parents also highlighting the importance of their children being physically ready (Section 4.3.6). This resonates with an 'empiricist/environmental' view of school readiness (Meisels, 1999) as

something that needs to be taught or learned and which is then demonstrated through appropriate behaviours by individual children. It contrasts with a more collaborative approach such as an 'interactionist' framework; in this study I found the onus was on children to demonstrate the behaviours and skills once in school, on adults to prepare them for this, and for teaching staff to monitor and assess 'readiness' and teach any missing skills.

Adults prioritised children's ability to control and contain their bodies in terms of managing self-care, particularly toileting independence, as well as conforming to the bodily requirements of the 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.102) such as sitting still, listening and lining up. At age four, these skills can be challenging. For example, sitting still is one of the hardest skills to achieve requiring an advanced level of balance and control (Goddard-Blythe, 2004). As with perspectives on school readiness, physical development was viewed as something which children needed to acquire (Meisels, 1999). Individual variation was discussed by parents and early years educators, particularly around sitting still, however the idea that school pedagogy might be altered was not considered.

Teaching staff emphasised the need for children to be '*trained*' during the staggered entry period to create bodies that were ready to '*start the learning*', learning which was seen to be impeded before the bodily expectations had been properly understood and complied with. Teachers explicitly taught rules in relation to establishing the regulative discourse of the classroom (Bernstein, 2000, p.102) for example, how to register, stop on the signal of a bell, line up and eat lunch. The teaching of rules extended to children practising the way they needed to ask to go to the toilet, as well as choosing the correct time to go so that whole class learning was not impeded. This was consistent with the few studies examining toileting and how this can prove so challenging in the school transition that it impacts negatively on children's physical as well as psychological well-being (Harrison and Murray, 2014; Tatlow-Golden et al., 2016). Research on starting school has not generally included a central focus on children's embodied experience (Section 2.5.4); in contrast a core finding of this study is that adults were focused on readying children's bodies to receive the teaching.

In this study, much of the schooling of the body occurred in a striated space (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) where the expectations on the body were strongly classified and framed (Bernstein, 2000). Pedagogical decisions by teachers, influenced by policies in the exosystem, created striated spaces which were closely monitored. Whilst this need not be inherently negative, as predictable and clearly laid out expectations can make it clear to children what to do, difficulties can arise if children are not allowed to smooth the space to meet their physical needs. Yet again, as noted in Section 2.5.5, this has implications for individuals whose biological maturation is not yet easily able to meet the environmental

challenges. The impact of this can be seen on the body, in particular fatigue. Surveillance is key here as Foucault's 'microscope of conduct' (1977, p.174) describes; correcting the body, particularly in a group can impact negatively on an individual's wellbeing. It creates the possibility of being right or wrong, of being a successful or unsuccessful school child, of being included or excluded. Additionally, surveillance, even 'surveillance as care' (Steeves and Jones, 2010, p.187) can negatively affect an individual's sense of autonomy over their own bodies. Children did retain agency and there are examples where they managed to smooth a striated space, for example, by finding ways to leave it (Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2) or by comforting themselves with licking or sucking their fingers and arching their bodies when it was not possible to leave (Section 4.3.3). Jim's lunchtime experience, however, shows the intense impact on an individual as they try to exercise this agency while also complying with the expectations of the adults around them.

Findings showed that children's bodies worked hard in these striated spaces; knowing when and how to sit, speak and move within school formed a key part of children's embodied experiences of starting school. Events such as lunchtime, registration, preparation for phonics teaching and service were strongly framed with clear instructions about what the body needed to do and the sequence in which this needed to happen.

'Surveillance as care' (Steeves and Jones, 2010, p.187) was exemplified in this study, by the ways in which adults supervised the striated space of lunchtime in the hall. This event was regimented, with children being explicitly taught the multitude of instructions around bodily requirements; lining up for food, how to carry the tray, collect cutlery, where to sit, how to ask if you could move on to the pudding, whether you had eaten enough, clearing the tray and exiting the room. Whilst surveillance was well intentioned seeking to ensure that bodily requirements for food and drink were met, the monitoring system resulted in a loss of autonomy for children over their own bodily needs.

Pedagogical decisions taken by teaching staff were influenced by policies in the exosystem (Section 2.5.1) and resulted in strongly classified and framed events enacted within strongly striated spaces (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) during whole class carpet time. A significant part of children's embodied experiences of starting school was carpet time (Section 4.3.1). This 'functional site' (Foucault, 1977, p.143) partitioned individuals into specific places labelled with their name and was the focus for teaching and enforcing the expected body positions for attentive listening; the body position required to gain permission to speak; the language to be used and the requirement to control bodily urges for the duration of the event. Vigilant surveillance by adults ensured children were adhering to these requirements and, where children struggled, adults intervened. Literature on schooling the body generally

focuses on older children in primary or secondary education (Simpson, 2000; Devine, 2003). Although Dixon (2011) included children from four up to nine-years-old in her study it was situated in South Africa where children were still in 'informal' non-compulsory education. Despite the age differences, elements of the school environment resonate with this research which found that disciplinary practices of controlling timings and spacings of the school day helped to create 'docile' or 'schooled' bodies able to sit still at tables, to embody the practices needed for reading and writing. Findings in my study also resonated with Dixon's (2011) assertions that carpet time was a space where disciplinary practices acted on children's bodies in order that they perform the movements of the school child (Foucault, 1977). When starting school, these taken for granted practices are explicitly taught as part of the induction process; children tried to learn to perform these actions in order to embody and be acknowledged as a school child. In all these striated spaces children worked hard to comply with the bodily requirements; all chose to exercise their agency to become a 'body-in-place' (Rossholt, 2012) and some children found ways to exercise their agency and smooth the space. The playground offered a smoother space to children where actions were not so prescribed and the surveillance of adults or older children was much lower than in the striated spaces of carpet time, lunchtime and service.

The findings discussed in this section illuminate some limitations in the bioecological model's conception of power relations and the way in which power shapes the material world and bodies. Applying Bernstein's (2000) concepts of classification and framing illuminates the power relations within the microsystem as children start school. Spaces can be better understood by applying concepts of smooth or striated (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) and the extent to which they can be smoothed or striated by individuals. Foucault's concept of a 'docile' body enables the exploration of how these spaces and practices impact on children's bodies; integrating these theories allows for a deeper understanding of children's embodied experiences of starting school.

Widening the focus to the impact of the exosystem on the mesosystem, findings demonstrated the influence of top-down pressures related to government data targets and testing, for example, baseline assessments, GLD targets and the PSC (Section 2.5.1). Findings in this study concurred with research that found although the EYFS (DfE, 2017b) is a play-based curriculum, this is not always evident in practice (Alexander, 2010). At the 'macrotime' in England (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) there is a 'school readiness' agenda (Section 2.5.2) that is at odds with the principles of the EYFS (DfE, 2017b) which emphasises a developmentally appropriate play-based pedagogy. Government targets on the percentage of children that should be achieving GLD at the end of Reception and the PSC in Year 1 have all led to the prioritisation of 'official' school knowledge (Bernstein, 2000,

p.65) in literacy and mathematics particularly and a pressure for children to be ready to receive that knowledge in a particular way on arrival at school. Within the school, teaching staff explicitly talked about the targets children were expected to achieve by the end of the year and how these impacted on the progress required within the Reception year. As a result, there was pressure for children to arrive in school with a specified level of knowledge such as recognising numbers to ten and beginning to know some letter sounds as well as an ability to learn in a certain way (Section 4.3.8.5). The result is a deficit model where children can be seen as lacking before they begin their formal schooling.

During the transition from one microsystem (pre-school) to another (Reception), the relationship between all settings (the mesosystem) is of key importance. Although described by Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006, p.798) as 'bi-directional' (Section 2.2), in this study I found the mesosystem to be largely unidirectional in terms of communicating what it meant to be 'school ready'. School controlled the transition process with teachers communicating the need to have children's bodies ready for school to parents and to early years settings, imparting information to parents at parents' evenings and intervening in early years settings to implement literacy programmes related to phonics and mathematics programmes around numerals. The power of schools and consequently teachers was also evident as children began school with teachers controlling where parents could stand in school, what they could send in for snack and where they should position themselves during homework (Section 4.3.7).

The top-down pressures on teachers infiltrated practices in early years settings as teaching staff sought to ready the children before they arrived in school (Section 4.3.8.5) and also children's homes as teaching staff set and closely monitored phonics homework.

The final key finding was the impact of meeting the physical demands of school on children's bodies. When starting the transition process in England, children born in July and August are still three-years-old. Age is one element specified by Bronfenbrenner as a 'Demand' characteristic of the 'Person' that could influence proximal processes and therefore development. In this study it was the youngest children who found some tasks more physically demanding such as fastening buttons and reaching shelves. The bodily requirements to control and contain their bodies presented a greater challenge for them than for their older peers (Sharp et al., 2009). The 'Person' characteristics of this cohort meant that they worked hard to conform to the expectations of school and were keen to be 'bodies-in-place' (Rossholt, 2012) and observing bodily reactions of blushing and breathing more deeply gave insight into children's embarrassment or anxiety when not able to conform (Section 4.4.1).

The effort it took to control bodily impulses and movement throughout the school day impacted on them physically, with consequences of hunger and fatigue (Sections 4.4.3 and 4.4.4). Concurring with literature which found that young children were very tired as they started school (O'Toole et al., 2014) some children in this study fell asleep on the carpet or on the way home. The risk with these challenges is that children feel disempowered, a lack of bodily autonomy and experience a sense of failure, particularly when these physical tasks are associated with being a successful school child. Indeed, in practice, children who are unable to comply would be targeted for intervention and an even tighter system of surveillance would be enacted. The demands of these physical requirements, as they learnt to be a schooled body, were challenging for all six children, children who were keen to comply and had no identified additional needs.

Parents made adjustments at home to mitigate both the tiredness and hunger experienced by children (Sections 4.4.3 and 4.4.4). However, no mention was made of possible changes to wider systems and practices. Part of being a new school child appeared to be an acceptance from adults that this would inevitably result in exhaustion and hunger.

5.3 Chapter summary

The contextual layers of the bioecological model, combined with the acknowledgement of power relations embedded within the school microsystem (Bernstein, 2000), revealed the influence of wider systems on the proximal processes experienced by the children during the start to school. The exosystem influenced the school's practices; teachers strongly classified and framed the start to school as they felt they needed to ready the children for whole class teaching inputs. Government policies emphasising literacy and mathematics targets, particularly in relation to the phonics screening discussed in Section 2.8.2, led school to create timetables and teaching spaces that could deliver these. For example, the carpet was framed into a striated space (Section 4.3.1) where children could be taught phonics as a whole group at a fast pace. Strong boundaries between children's bodily urges such as toileting and classroom rules were put in place during this time in order that children did not miss direct instruction from the teacher. Teaching staff used surveillance to ensure compliance with these boundaries; this was at times discontinuous and could be categorised as surveillance as care. The disciplinary practice of observing and correcting body positions in these spaces impacted on children's bodies (Foucault, 1977) and the autonomy they could exercise over them. The proximal processes that children experienced in those first few weeks were therefore influenced by these 'linkages between macro structures and micro interactional communicative practices' (Bernstein 1990, p.101). All six children had entered a new microsystem where decisions taken at the exosystem impacted on their lived

experience without taking account of the impact of those decisions on individual children's bodies starting school.

Chapter 6 Implications and Conclusion

This final chapter draws out the contribution and implications of the study's key findings, its strengths and limitations, and ends with reflections on the impact on my own practice with recommendations for changes to practice and policy that would improve children's well-being in the transition to Reception in England.

Having begun with an overarching research question about children's experience of the transition into school in the context of their families and educators, when engaging with children's data, I selected a focus on children's embodied experiences and adults' awareness of these.

To address this, two sub questions were identified; the first focuses on the direct embodied experiences of children as they start school and the second focuses on the adults' description of these embodied experiences.

RQ 1.1 What is the embodied experience of children as they transition into a Reception class?

Children experienced the start to school as multi-sensory, embodied individuals encountering a new microsystem with unfamiliar sounds, smells and textures. Non-human objects and matter were salient to their experiences. Everyday materialities carried meanings about the specialised context of school; deciphering these was part of learning about the culture of school and their position within it. Some objects were disempowering because of their relative size and scale; children were expected to adapt rather than objects or the environment being adapted to them.

Adapting to the behavioural expectations of the classroom was core to the transition process with children 'schooling' in key striated spaces. Requirements focused on exactly how and when to sit, speak, move, and eat; of particular challenge was the need to control the body when sitting for prolonged periods and containing physical urges such as needing the toilet. Surveillance was strong in these spaces to ensure children complied. The physical demands impacted on children's bodies; discomfort, hunger and fatigue were of particular note. Children were active in the transition process, seeking to meet all requirements and sometimes 'smoothing' striated spaces.

RQ 1.2 How do parents and teachers/educators describe this embodied transition?

All adults described this transition emphasising the need for children to be made ready before the start to school and demonstrate the behaviours of readiness once in school, thus

aligning with an 'empiricist' school readiness model. There was no explicit recognition of the embodied and material nature of the transition. However, the descriptions of what adults meant by 'school ready' were about children's bodies being able to manage their self-care in relation to toileting and clothing and controlling their bodies to meet the requirements of the classroom. Adults' descriptions of transition also illuminated the largely unidirectional nature of power in the mesosystem. School influenced early years educators and parents to prepare children's bodies in this way and this even extended to shaping parents' bodies in school and infiltrating family time with parents urged to closely supervise children's homework.

In addressing a gap in literature on children's embodied, contextual experience of starting school, this thesis also contributed a theoretical integration of Bernstein, Foucault and new materialism into the bioecological model to highlight issues of power, constraint and materiality in children's transitions to Reception.

6.1 Strengths and limitations

The case study approach is both a strength and a limitation. A small number of participants limits generalisability but facilitates in-depth exploration of experiences. It is therefore more appropriate to aim for transferability or 'naturalistic generalisability' (Stake, 1995; Smith, 2018) where readers decide how relevant the research is to their own situation. I have aimed to communicate findings in a detailed and accessible way, to enable others to assess the relevance of the findings to their own contexts.

The selection of participants by the nursery staff was necessary, but – in contrast to my initial study where I had been able to invite two children who were already struggling with the transition in some way – staff chose parents who were approachable and likely to agree to being involved. The study cannot comment on diversity in terms of ethnicity, location or additional needs, as the six children were all of a similar background, living in a rural location and none had any additional needs identified. However, this does make it harder to discount these children's embodied experiences as being caused by any perceived disadvantages. Identified as a confident and independent cohort with no external challenges, these children all found aspects of the start to school physically challenging. The implications are that it would be substantially more so for those with additional needs.

My dual role as teacher and researcher provided access to the school setting. Ethical challenges included the impact of my 'insider' role. Yet this was also a benefit, in facilitating staff interviews and parent and early years educator participation as well as allowing me

insight into what 'normally' happens in school and hence the ability to contextualise the data I was collecting.

6.2 Contribution of the thesis

6.2.1 Theoretical integration on transition to school

This study has presented an adapted version of the bioecological model created by Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) and visualised by Tudge (2008). To take account of the power relations embedded within schools, Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing were used; these also enabled the specialised nature of school contexts to be recognised. To explore the impact of these power relations on children, in particular on their bodies, Foucault's concept of the 'docile body' (1977) offers insight. The limitations of the bioecological model in relation to proximal processes and objects has been addressed by incorporating theories from new materialism which allow an exploration of assemblages between children starting school and the material world of school and the classroom. A visualisation of the integrated model was presented in Figure 3 and has been extended below to incorporate the findings (Figure 36).

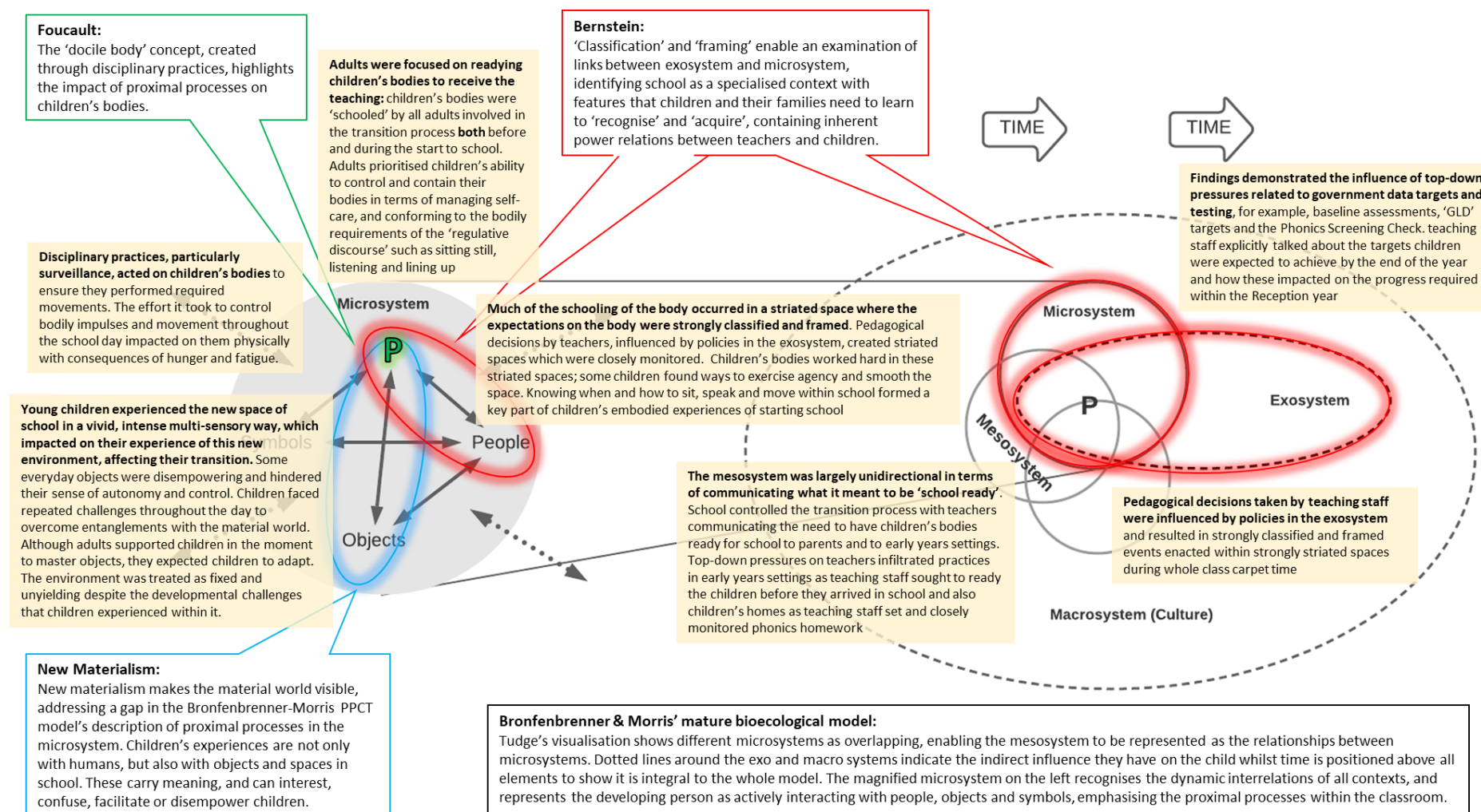


Figure 36 - Findings incorporated within the integrated theoretical model.

6.2.2 A gap in knowledge is addressed

This thesis adds substantially to literature that has focused on children's perspectives on the transition to school by providing insight into children's lived experiences as they enter a Reception class. It foregrounds the physicality of starting school, exploring the previously under-researched embodied experiences of young children in England; their interaction with the material world and how the regulative discourse of the classroom impacts on their experiences. This study provides rich empirical evidence of young children's bodily experiences as they start school; it offers detailed analyses of how they engage with the material world, oftentimes assumed by adults to be inflexible elements of the school environment to which young bodies must adapt. In addition, adults' descriptions of school readiness have been shown to focus on the disciplinary practices and prescribed actions required to produce a schooled body.

6.2.3 Recommendations: Practice

6.2.3.1 Recognising the importance of the material world as children start school

This study found that adults, despite being strongly focused on training children's bodies in transition, largely overlooked proximal processes that can enhance or hinder children's transition into school such as their multi-sensory experiences and many encounters with everyday objects. Children's desire to participate and capacity to learn could be positively impacted by addressing assemblages between children and the material world (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) that caused discomfort or confusion. Adult awareness of and alertness to these everyday interactions by taking a 'more-than-human approach (Lupton, 2019) could help children develop a greater sense of belonging and liking for school in these first few weeks.

Specific aspects of the material world that children encounter in Reception are potentially disempowering; attention should be paid to everyday materialities to ensure they are enabling rather than disabling. There is already a system in place through which Reception practice could be altered in response to these findings, as observing children is a core practice in early years classrooms, and this forms part of the entry assessment process (whether formal or informal) during the start to school. The findings have already affected my own classroom practice. When children start school, I am alert to responses to sounds, smells, textures and objects, and I carry out photo tours with pairs of children during the first three weeks of school so they can express thoughts and feelings about the wider space. Questions about spaces or objects can be asked and answered in the moment, with the aim of decreasing the strange and unfamiliar and helping to create a sense of belonging.

Table 6 suggests questions that practitioners in Reception and in whole school environment can ask to consider children's sensory experiences and interactions with objects.

Table 6 Prompts for practitioners

Sensory experiences	Objects
Are any sounds, smells, textures, tastes proving challenging for children?	What messages are objects conveying to children? Are these messages positive?
Can any challenging sensations be altered to improve the experience of the environment for children?	Are any objects disempowering children? Could they be changed to increase children's autonomy?
Are children encouraged to express how they feel about their sensory experiences in the new environment?	Are there objects specific to school that could be explained to children? Are children encouraged to express how they feel about the objects they experience in school?

6.2.3.2 Awareness of the physical demands of a 'schooled' body

Awareness of the pressure on children to demonstrate a schooled body is important, especially in the early weeks, and this includes being conscious of the power relations between adults and children in this space (Bernstein, 2000). In my own practice, an increased awareness of key striated spaces and the impact of these on children's bodies has resulted in changes. I am less prescriptive over total uniformity of body positioning on the carpet: whilst attending to the teaching is critical, how the listening occurs is not, and sitting between the knees or with legs to one side, rather than cross-legged, is not problematic.

Striated spaces are not inevitably negative (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987); set practices and routines can circumnavigate the need to negotiate terms each time. However, we as teachers should consider the restrictive nature of a space that does not allow for 'lines of flight' or for children to 'smooth' the space enough to meet their physical needs. Children worrying about needing the toilet at the wrong time or asking for it in the wrong way is unlikely to be conducive to concentration, well-being, learning or developing a love of school. Likewise feeling hungry, or so tired you are falling asleep, is detrimental to wellbeing, to a capacity to learn, and to a sense of self as a positive learner. An awareness that intense surveillance of the body as a disciplinary practice (Foucault, 1977) could lead to feelings of disempowerment, even where those are intended as 'surveillance as care' (Steeves and

Jones, 2010) could also reduce the physical demands and the intensity of those demands at mealtimes.

The upcoming revision of the EYFS curriculum due to be implemented in September 2021, moves the physical requirements related to the 'regulative discourse' of the classroom from the 'hidden curriculum' into the revised 'Development Matters' curriculum documentation (DfE, 2020b). In physical development for the Reception year, the statements resonate with the idea of the 'schooling body' such as being able to sit at a table or on the floor with 'a good posture' and referring to specific skills needed to 'manage the school day successfully': 'lining up and queuing; personal hygiene and 'mealtimes' (DfE, 2020b, p.45). In addition, it refers to a surveillance role for teachers to ensure that children are using everyday objects efficiently:

Continuously check how children are holding pencils for writing, scissors and knives and forks. Offer regular, gentle encouragement and feedback. With regular practice, the physical skills children need to eat with a knife and fork and develop an efficient handwriting style will become increasingly automatic. (p. 43)

Given the findings of this study, it will be important that teachers implementing the new curriculum in practice resist increasing the striation of Reception spaces and surveillance of Reception children.

Overall, the revised EYFS (DfE, 2020c, p.9) recognises the importance of physical development for 'all-round development' and for future health, setting out in the statutory document that children should have 'opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors' where adults can play games and support children's development. However, within the constraints of a system that requires baseline assessments, systematic synthetic phonics teaching from the start and that sets targets of the proportion of children who need to achieve GLD, change is needed at the exosystem level to allow early years spaces to remain truly early years.

6.2.4 Recommendations: Policy

6.2.4.1 Reduce emphasis on formal teaching and assessment in Reception.

The spaces, practices and material world of the classroom and wider school should meet children's physical, emotional and educational needs. Starting formal schooling at an early age can impact negatively on children (Sharp et al., 2009; Balestra et al., 2020). Entering Reception at four-years-old where top-down pressures to generate data have increased the formality of teaching, places challenging physical demands on children.

Sitting still is one of the most demanding physical skills developmentally, particularly when combined with the need to control bodily impulses such as leaving to go to the toilet. Underlying adults' intense focus on these two aspects was the exosystem-mandated pedagogy of the Reception class, shaped by the requirement to teach phonics at pace from week five. Schools emphasised this skill with parents and early years educators who practised it with children; it was synonymous with being a 'good' or 'successful' school child. Yet at this age, the most effective way of achieving the physical skill of sitting still is actually to have more movement opportunities rather than less (O'Connor and Daly, 2016).

To achieve this, the Reception classroom needs to be protected as a space honouring early years principles of meeting children's physical needs and valuing active and play-based learning. The 'Getting it right in the EYFS' (Pascal et al., 2019) evidence review recommends reprioritising the Prime EYFS areas including physical development alongside the characteristics of effective teaching and learning until at least the end of the Foundation Stage. Reducing the need for formal whole class teaching would alleviate the pressure on schools to create strongly striated spaces to contain children so that they can generate the data required to evidence progress towards government targets in literacy and mathematics (Bradbury, 2019). In addition, it would alleviate the need for this skill to be over-emphasised throughout the mesosystem; early years settings would not need to practise it as matter of priority and could instead focus on allowing movement that would, ironically, increase children's ability to carry out this skill in the future.

Reducing the need for striated spaces would also decrease the intensity of surveillance and hence lessen pressure on proximal processes between teachers and children. Having the minutest body movements observed, commented on and corrected throughout the day, every day, is likely to impact on a child's sense of self as a school child. It communicates to children that their identity as school children is dependent on achievement, conformity and 'being right'.

There is therefore need for a fundamental change at the exosystem level. Whilst individual educators can attempt to mitigate the impact of policies decided by government and enacted through the Multi-Academy Trust and school system, government policies need to be altered so that they are built on research findings which consistently emphasise the importance of a developmentally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy (Alexander, 2010; Pascal et al., 2019).

6.2.4.2 Meeting the needs of the body

While there is no legislative requirement to wear uniform in England, government statements support its use in 'establishing the right ethos' (DfE, 2013) and the school in this study had a specific uniform policy. The need for children to wear uniform was an unexamined element of children's experience of starting school. I recommend reflecting on what this does to promote learning and well-being; clothes that are restrictive are not only uncomfortable and therefore distracting, but also prevent free movement. Formal shirts with buttons and ties at age four create barriers to dressing and undressing successfully – even more challenging for the youngest children, those who lack experience, or have physical difficulties. Clothes that promote free movement and are easy to manage when toileting or changing would be empowering and help children gain autonomy over their own bodies.

For children and their parents there was increased stress in trying to meet physical needs within the constraints of school requirements. Children being so tired that it was a struggle to eat in the evening before falling asleep impacted health and well-being. Homework added an additional strain with parents reporting how they tried to incorporate this new task three times a week yet still provide enough time for rest and food. Given the lack of evidence in its effectiveness for young children (Sharp et al., 2001; Medwell and Wray, 2019) I would recommend that homework in the form of tasks that require a school pedagogy, particularly those that require children to write, are not appropriate or helpful for Reception children as they transition into school.

Not only would this improve physical well-being in the short term, but it would also promote rather than hinder a liking for school which has been shown to increase participation and achievement in the long term (Ladd et al., 2000; Margetts, 2002; Dunlop, 2003). In addition, physical well-being is now known to be closely associated with emotional and mental health. I recommend prioritising an awareness of children's bodily needs alongside their educational needs as happens in early years settings.

6.3 Conclusion

This study's findings resonate with research on children's rights in school highlighting that children's voice is often limited to an adult's agenda rather than encompassing matters significant to them (Alderson, 2000). Everyday practices in school, some of which constrain children's agency, are often overlooked in the education system (Bordonaro, 2012);

Entering into this research with a strong belief in and commitment to hearing children's voices and respecting their rights led to my use of participatory methods; children's responses to these methods emphasised the significance of material things as well as the significance of the physicality of transition. Theories which would enable explanations of children's lived experiences were selected; Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) to illuminate the complexity of interactions between the child and other people and environments, as well as the influence of policy in the exosystem on the meso and microsystems; Bernstein (2000) to account for the power relations in school; Foucault (1977) to focus on the impact of these power relations on children's bodies and new materialism (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Lupton, 2019) to encompass the materialities of the transition experience.

In this study, these very young children starting school, had limited choices about what happened to their bodies throughout the day. They were disadvantaged from full participation and enjoyment during transition due to the discrepancy between the physical demands being placed on them and their physical capacities. Their embodied experiences were at times detrimental to their physical, emotional, and educational well-being.

Paying attention to the physical needs of children as they enter school to ensure that the demands placed on the body are appropriate to children's age and stage of development could transform the transition process, promoting inclusion, a sense of autonomy, participation, and well-being.

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Chapter 8 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Information sheet and consent form



Transitioning to school: Multiple perspectives. An exploration of the perspectives of children, their parents/carers and their practitioners during the children's transition into a Reception class

Dear

I am exploring the transition process as children start school. As this is such an important time for children (and their parents) my aim is to learn more about how all participants experience the transition. I am keen to gather the perspectives of all those involved. At the centre are the children, and around them are their parents/carers, their keyperson in nursery who is preparing them for school, and the teaching staff who will receive them into Reception.

I am carrying out this research as part of my EdD research with The Open University. The project is being supervised by Dr. Mimi Tatlow-Golden and Professor Jane Payler from The Open University.

Why has my child been invited to take part?

I am focusing on children who are due to start X School in September 2018 and am aiming to choose both children who love to communicate verbally as well as those who prefer to communicate through drawing or role play for example. This will allow me to hear a range of opinions about what it is like to start to school.

What does it involve?

This study will run from May 2018 until December 2018.

For children whose parents consent, I will be observing and interacting with them in nursery and at school. I will not be carrying out any additional tests and will only continue if participating children are ok with this.

Observing- just as children have been observed within nursery, I would be observing key times such as going out to play, or drop off time. I would also be playing alongside your child during free play and, when appropriate, talking to them about what they think about starting school. With your permission, and their agreement I plan to audio record these conversations.

Encouraging children to take photos with the iPad- I would use the equipment available in school and use their photos to talk about what they enjoy or find challenging about school.

As their parent/carer, you are obviously a crucial part of this transition, and I would like to have two informal interviews with you to find out how you and your child are experiencing it; one before your child starts at school, and one near October half term. I would like to audio record these so that I can transcribe the conversation in an accurate way. I would delete the recording as soon as it is written up. All transcripts and written records would be anonymised.

When would this take place?

Observations: I plan to attend for 1 or 2 sessions a week during June and July this year whilst your child is in nursery. Once your child starts school, I would then attend 4 sessions a week during the staggered entry programme of attendance (in September and October) and would choose appropriate times, in discussion with the school and their teacher, during the session to engage with your child. For example, I

Contact details:

Vicky Preece: vpr@open.ac.uk

Dr Mimi Tatlow-Golden mimi.tatlow-golden@open.ac.uk

would play alongside them as a normal part of the entry routine and would respect their right to choose to play elsewhere or not to chat with me if they prefer not to.

Interview: The first interview with you, the parent, would take place before your child starts school in July this year. The second interview would ideally take place near to October half term. I am happy to discuss when would be most convenient for you.

How will confidentiality be maintained?

Information collected from all participants will be kept anonymous, for example participants, nurseries and schools will be given pseudonyms and will not be able to be identified when the study is reported.

All information will be securely stored to comply with data protection. Recordings will be encrypted and transferred to a password protected laptop before leaving the school, nursery or parents' home where the recording was taken.

Safeguarding of children

If any safeguarding issue arose, the settings' safeguarding policy would be followed. In that instance confidentiality could not be guaranteed. I am a qualified teacher, have up-to-date safeguarding training and an enhanced DBS certificate.

How will the information be used?

The information will be analysed, themes created and the findings discussed in an EdD thesis due to be completed in October 2020. The information may also be used in conference presentations or academic papers. No settings or people will be identifiable.

Can I withdraw consent?

Participation is completely voluntary and is entirely your own decision. You can withdraw consent at any time during the data collection phase. If there is a withdrawal of consent before data collection is complete in December 2018, all data will be destroyed. Data cannot be destroyed after the data collection phase at the end of December 2018.

What next?

If you would like further information or have any questions, then please feel free to contact myself (vikp2@open.ac.uk) or Dr. Mimi Tatlow-Golden (mimi.tatlow-golden@open.ac.uk)

If you are happy for you and your child to participate in this study, a consent form is available to sign.

Many thanks

Vicky Preece

Contact details:

Vicky Preece: vikp2@open.ac.uk

Dr Mimi Tatlow-Golden mimi.tatlow-golden@open.ac.uk

Consent Form

Transitioning to school: Multiple perspectives.
An exploration of the perspectives of children, their parents/carers and their practitioners during the children's transition into a Reception class.

Researcher- Vicky Preece

Project supervisor- Dr. Mimi Tatlow-Golden

I agree to participate in this study and to the participation of my child _____

I have read the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask further questions. I understand that once consent has been obtained from all participants:

- my child will be observed in nursery (June/July) and in school (September-November)
- my child will be encouraged to take and discuss photos with the iPads in school
- I will be interviewed to discuss the transition process from my perspective
- the informal interview will be audio recorded and this recording will be deleted as soon as it has been transferred onto the researcher's laptop
- the researcher will also interview nursery staff and staff in school
- pseudonyms will be used to protect identities from the point of data collection
- data will be securely stored using encrypted files on a password protected laptop
- data will be deleted at the end of the researcher's doctoral studies which will be no later than June 2021
- I can receive information about the findings once the data has been analysed and written up as part of the EdD thesis.
- I give permission for the findings to be used for academic papers and conference presentation.
- I can withdraw consent until the end of the data collection phase up to 31st December 2018

Signature of Parent

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Contact details:

Vicky Preece: vp28@open.ac.uk

Dr Mimi Tatlow-Golden mimi.tatlow-golden@open.ac.uk

Appendix 2 – Child Information Sheet

<p>Hi,</p>  <p>My name is Mrs Preece</p>	<p>I will be coming to visit you at nursery</p> 	<p>You could show me the things you like to play with.</p> 	<p>I will ask you about your new school.</p> 
<p>I will come to visit you at your new school.</p> 	<p>I will ask you if you would like to do some drawing.</p> 	<p>I will ask you if you would like to read a book together.</p> 	
<p>I will ask you if you would like to use the ipads to take photos of your favourite places at school.</p> 	<p>When I come you can choose if you want to join in.</p> 	<p>If you don't want to, that's no problem. It's up to you.</p> 	

Appendix 3 – Excerpt of Interview Transcript

Participant: Jill Early Years Educator in Pre-school (Key person to Olivia and Albert)

Data type: Interview

Location: Small office in pre-school

Date: 19/07/18

Time: 9.55am- 10.16am

Event: Interview about transition from key person viewpoint

RESEARCHER: Ok so this is about you as key person

JILL: Yes

RESEARCHER: And about how you find the transition basically

JILL: Right

RESEARCHER: So how do you feel when your little lot go up to school?

JILL: ((sharp intake of breath)) don't even talk about it ((sharp intake of breath)) scared for them (.) scared. But better this year because the fact we're here.

RESEARCHER: Yes is this the first year you've done this - have you been here a year?

JILL: Yes we've been here nearly two years but yeah they've been in the classroom as they did last year, they've been in the classroom a bit **more** this year again so better that they know where they're going and they can see the big kids.

RESEARCHER: Yes so they get used to it a bit more familiar because you've been able to go into the classroom and things haven't you?

JILL: Yes and Ms Brown's been over here and when they've been out on a trip they've been over for you know like a couple of hours.

RESEARCHER: Yes so quite a nice long time

JILL: They've been in and out the toilets

RESEARCHER: Brilliant - how were they with that?

JILL: Terrified of the hand-dryer

RESEARCHER: Oh really?

JILL: Yep. They're not now because every time we go we put hand-dryer on.

RESEARCHER: Right

JILL: And they **all** dry their hands (.) 'cos it's **so** loud and

RESEARCHER: And it's very sudden that noise

JILL: It's a weird thing but it is things like that that freak 'em out (.) toilets, hand-dryers

RESEARCHER: Yep

JILL: rather than anything else in the classroom

Appendix 4 – Interview Schedule

Interview schedule- parents

Parent/Carer

First interview

Opening: Explain my role as researcher and how it differs from teacher. Explain that my aim is to listen to their experience of the transition process. State clearly that if they have a specific concern or need advice about their child, they will need to see the class teacher as usual. Go over the consent, their right not to answer a question and confidentiality (as well as its limits re safeguarding). Remind that I want to learn about the transition from their point of view- no right or wrong answers.

General, open ended question that allows the participant to decide on how the conversation develops, for example:

So _____ is starting school next month. How do you feel about that?

Prompts:

What do you think the key changes might be?

Is there anything you or _____ are concerned about?

What are the things that you are looking forward to?

More specific topics for discussion based on previous research if not covered by the initial conversation starter:

How did _____ get on at the settling visit? Did you find it useful as a parent? (Prompt- why?)

Thinking about the start to school, how do you feel about:

the learning within the classroom?

times outside the classroom – such as times associated with ‘daily living’ ... drop off or eating ... the playground? any other?

Open questions that focus on positives:

What are you looking forward to about _____ starting school?

What are your hopes for his/her Reception year?

Is there anything else you would like to add about the transition?

Closing: Explain that I will download the content of the interview and then delete the recording. They are welcome to see the transcript. Check they are still Ok to have a second interview near October half term. Thank them for their participation.

Second interview:

Will review issues raised in the first interview, for example:

In our first interview you mentioned you were concerned about _____ What happened about that when they started school?

In our first interview you mentioned you were looking forward to _____ What happened about that when they started school?

Additional questions would focus on how they feel about the transition now that their child is attending fulltime.

Now that they are fulltime in school, how do you feel about:

the learning within the classroom?

times outside the classroom – such as times associated with ‘daily living’ ... drop off or eating ... the playground? any other?

It will follow the same process as the first interview in that it will end by discussing positives:

What has been the most positive aspect of starting school?

Is there anything else you would like to add about transition?

Appendix 5 – Logs of Data Collection

8.1.1.1 Interviews with early years educators

Participant	Date	Location	Duration
Emma; keyperson to Xavier	19.7.18	Pre-school office	9.26am-9.51am 25 minutes
Jill; keyperson to Olivia and Albert	19.7.18	Pre-school office	9.55am-10.16am 21 minutes
Karen; keyperson to Sean	27.7.18	Nursery in empty Kindergarten room	3.14pm-3.24pm 10 minutes
Tess; keyperson to Cassandra and Jim	30.7.18	Nursery in empty Kindergarten room	10.10am-10.25am 15 minutes

8.1.1.2 Interviews with teaching staff in school

Participant	Date	Location	Duration
Ms. Brown	17.9.18	Reception classroom	12.55pm-1.11pm 16 minutes
Ms. Grey	14.2.19	Small classroom	3.45pm-3.55pm 10 minutes
Ms. White	27.2.19	Reception classroom	12.42pm-12.49pm 7 minutes

8.1.1.3 Interviews with parents before their child had started school

Participant	Date	Location	Duration
Sean's Mum	16.7.18	Home	6.20pm-6.35pm

			15 minutes
Cassandra's Mum	17.7.18	Home	7.47pm-8.03pm 16 minutes
Olivia's Mum	18.7.18	Pre-school office	9.05am-9.15am 10 minutes
Jim's Mum	18.7.18	Home	2.30pm-2.41pm 11 minutes
Zavier's Mum	18.7.18	Home	11.56am-12.16pm 20 minutes

8.1.1.4 Interviews with parents once their child was fulltime in school

Participant	Date	Location	Duration
Olivia's Mum	25.10.18	Pre-school office	9.10am-9.15am 5 minutes
Cassandra's Mum	30.10.18	Home	9.01pm-9.28pm 27 minutes
Albert's Mum	1.11.18	Home	10.50am-11.14am 24 minutes
Jim's Mum	1.11.18	Home	12.50pm-12.59pm 9 minutes
Zavier's Mum	6.11.18	Home	7.54pm-8.17pm 23 minutes
Sean's Mum	15.2.19	Reception classroom at end of day	3.45pm-3.53pm 8 minutes

8.1.1.5 Observations

Participant	Date	Location	Focus of visit	Duration
Albert Olivia Zavier	13.6.18	Pre-school- inside and outside space	Familiarisation	1.30pm- 2.15pm 45 mins
Cassandra Jim (Sean-absent)	21.6.18	Nursery- inside and outside space	Familiarisation	10.35am-12.30pm 1hour and 55 mins
Jim Olivia Sean Zavier (Cassandra- absent)	25.6.18	School-classroom	Observation of induction afternoon	1.30pm-2.15pm 45 mins
Albert	26.6.18	School- classroom	Observation of induction afternoon	1.30pm- 2.15pm 45 mins
Jim	28.6.18	Nursery- outside space	Conversation about induction whilst sharing book 'Going to school' (Civardi, 2005).	10.30am-11.45am 1 hour and 15 mins
Sean	2.7.18	Nursery- book corner	Conversation about induction whilst sharing book 'Going to school' (Civardi, 2005).	1.00pm-1.30pm 30 minutes
Albert Olivia Sean Zavier	5.7.18	Pre-school- inside and outside	Conversation about induction afternoon (book sharing refused).	9.10am- 10.00am 50 mins
Cassandra Jim	12.7.18	Nursery- inside Kindergarten and outside space	Timed observation (1 hour) of 'typical' freeflow session. One child asked to draw with me during this time.	1.00pm- 2.45pm 1 hour and 45 mins

Albert Olivia Sean Zavier	19.7.18	Pre-school- inside and outside	Timed observation (1 hour) of 'typical' freeflow session.	9.15am- 10.30am 1 hour and 15 mins
Albert Cassandra Jim Sean Zavier	10.9.18	School- classroom and playground	Observation: First session in school as a school child.	9.00am- 12 noon 3 hours
Olivia	10.9.18	School- classroom and playground	Observation: First session in school as a school child.	1.30pm- 3.30pm 2 hours
Albert Cassandra Jim Sean Zavier	11.9.18	School- classroom and playground	Observation: Second session in school as a school child.	9.00am- 12 noon 3 hours
Albert Cassandra Jim Olivia Sean Zavier	24.9.18	School- classroom and hall	Observation: First time attending as a whole class of 26 children and first time having lunch in hall.	9.00am- 1.00pm 4 hours
Albert Cassandra Jim Olivia Sean Zavier	25.9.18	School- classroom and hall	Observation: Second time attending as a whole class of 26 children and having lunch.	9.00am- 12.30pm 3 hours and 30 mins

Albert Cassandra Jim Olivia Sean Zavier	1.10.18	School- classroom	Observation: First full day in school.	9.00am- 12 noon and 1.15pm- 3.30pm 5 hours and 15 mins
Albert Cassandra Jim Olivia Sean Zavier	8.10.18	School- classroom and hall	Observation: First time attending service in hall with their buddies.	2.45pm- 3.10pm 25 mins
Albert Cassandra Jim Sean	15.10.18	School- classroom	Snippets of conversation as children initiated interactions after draw and talk session.	10.50am- 11.30am 40 mins

8.1.1.6 Draw and talk

Session overview	Participant	Date	Location	Duration
<p>Explained the purpose of the draw and talk activity.</p> <p>Revisited child information sheet.</p> <p>Groups organised according to who was not engaged in an adult directed task.</p> <p>With permission, conversations were recorded on a dictaphone.</p> <p>Drawings were photocopied and children were offered a copy of their own; four chose to take one, Sean and Xavier did not.</p>	Albert Cassandra Zavier	1.10.18	Reception classroom	9.59am- 10.05am 6 minutes
	Jim Olivia Sean	1.10.18	Reception classroom	10.15 am- 10.22am 7 minutes
<p>Explained the purpose of the draw and talk activity and why we were in a different location.</p> <p>Revisited child information sheet and left it out as a visual reminder.</p> <p>Groups organised according to friendships.</p> <p>With permission, conversations were recorded on a dictaphone.</p> <p>Drawings were photocopied and children were offered a copy of their own; all chose to take one.</p>	Cassandra Jim Olivia	15.10.18	Library- a small carpeted alcove off the corridor	9.46am- 10.03am 17 minutes
	Albert Sean Zavier	15.10.18	Library- a small carpeted alcove off the corridor	10.21am- 10.32am/ 10.35am Sean and Zavier 11 minutes; Albert 14 minutes

8.1.1.7 Photo tours

Participant	Individual or paired tour	Number of photos taken	Number of photos deleted	Number of photos kept	Locations chosen by children	Duration
Zavier	Individual	10	0	10 (1 not used as older child identifiable)	Big playground; Hall; Corridor; Outside classroom; Cloakroom	9.26am-9.35am 9 minutes
Cassandra	Paired with Sean	52	13	37	Outside classroom; Field; Forest school; Big playground; Hall; Corridor; Classroom	9.52am-10.09am 17 minutes
Sean	Paired with Cassandra	72	37	35	Outside classroom; Field; Forest school; Big playground; Hall; Corridor; Classroom	9.52am-10.09am 17 minutes
Jim	Individual	26	5	21	Big playground; Hall; Corridor; Cloakroom; Classroom	10.10am- 10.20am 10 minutes
Olivia	Individual	8	0	8	Big playground; Hall; Corridor; Library (an alcove off the corridor); Adventure playground	10.30am-10.39am 9 minutes
Albert	Individual	13	3	10	Corridor; Hall; Corridor Library (an alcove off the corridor); Outside classroom; Field	10.58am-11.06am 8 minutes

Appendix 6 – Excerpt of Observation Transcript

Participants: Ms White; Olivia; Albert; Jim; Xavier; Cassandra; Sean

Data type: Observation

Location: School- classroom moving to hall

Date: 8/10/18

Time: 2.45pm-3.10pm

Event: First time attending whole school service in the hall

In classroom- The children are gathered on the carpet before going into service for the first time. Ms White encourages them to 'look smart'. 'Ties on nice and straight, shirts tucked into your trousers. Tuck your shirts in, we don't want any shirts showing'.

She looks at Albert who has his shirt untucked.

Ms White: 'Let me look at you Albert. You put your hands at the side and you push it in.'

Albert: 'I can't do my back bit' (he tries to tuck the shirt into his trousers).

Ms White helps him tuck it in.

The class is tucking shirts and moving ties. Then the year 4 children arrive.

Ms White: 'Your buddies are coming in now. You stand up nicely when they call you.'

Year 4 come in and stand by the carpet and call the name of their buddy. That child gets up and holds their hand. The year 4 takes them to line up at the door.

They walk to the hall holding hands with their buddy. No talking.

Hall- When they go in, the head teacher is at the front and indicates where they are to sit. The children go in and sit in a line so that they are next to their buddy. Cassandra looks across at me [I am sitting at the side with a notebook and pen so look quite conspicuous] and smiles then holds her legs and pulls them into a cross-legged position. She then turns round and waves at the children behind her. Her buddy shakes her head and demonstrates putting hands in lap in an exaggerated way. Cassandra copies. The buddy puts her arm around Cassandra. Cassandra smiles at her.

The rest of the school enters and sits in rows nearer the back. As part of the usual routine a child is chosen to light the candle. Albert looks behind him as the candle is lit then towards

the candle as the child says 'I'm lighting this candle to show...' The rest of the school chants 'That Jesus is the light of the world.' The six participant children are watching the candle. Then they look at the head teacher who is explaining about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Cassandra wriggles and her buddy leans towards her and smiles. C smiles back and stops wriggling.

The head teacher welcomes Reception class and then each buddy in turn introduces their Reception child. Each are welcomed to service by the head.

Albert sucks his fingers then bends his ear repeatedly then yawns. Olivia pulls at her tights watching as they spring back. The room feels very hot.

The children are asked to sing 'All things bright and beautiful' to practise for the Harvest celebration in church. The signs for 'beautiful' and 'all' are demonstrated and the school is asked to help Reception learn the signs by doing it while they are singing. Xavier sighs and leans towards buddy. He sits up then puts his hand to the top of his head and wipes it down his face. He licks his fingers and looks at them. He turns to look at his buddy as the song starts.

During hymn- Jim tries to copy signs. He looks at his buddy who is signing. He then retries signing. He looks at the screen. The screen is showing the words. Cassandra is sitting still neither singing nor signing. Her buddy touches her on the back and whispers 'You ok?' She turns slightly towards her to show her the sign for 'all'. Cassandra copies.

Sean and Albert look at the screen and the head teacher, copying her as she signs.

Zavier's ears are red (hot hall?) and he sucks the heel of his hand.

Olivia sits still looking at the screen neither singing nor signing.

Appendix 7 – Excerpt of Draw and Talk Transcript

Participants: Jim; Olivia; Cassandra

Data type: Conversation during draw and talk

Location: Library area (a small, carpeted alcove off the corridor) leaning on books on the floor to draw. Pot of pencils and pencil crayons available.

Date: 15/10/18

Time: 9.46am - 10.03am

Event: Draw and talk

RESEARCHER: I saw that you went to service for the first time last week didn't you? Did your buddies take you?

CASSANDRA: Yea (quietly)

RESEARCHER: Who's your buddy Cassandra?

CASSANDRA: Mya

RESEARCHER: And who's yours Jim?

JIM: I don't know their name.

RESEARCHER: You don't know their name?

(Jim shakes his head.)

RESEARCHER: Is it a boy or a girl?

JIM: It's 2, 2 boys.

RESEARCHER: Two! You've got two buddies have you? Wow so first can you draw me a picture of service please?

CASSANDRA: I drawin' the seats in the service

RESEARCHER: Oh you're drawing the seats are you? Who sits in those?

CASSANDRA: Everyone was seating on seats.

JIM: No they don't sit on seats, they sit on the floor.

RESEARCHER: They sit on the floor do they? And do they sit next to each other?

OLIVIA: I doing service.

RESEARCHER: So what did you do in service?

CASSANDRA: We said 'Good afternoon' sign.

RESEARCHER: You did the 'Good afternoon' sign did you?

CASSANDRA: Yea and we done we done we done the one on the big screen.

RESEARCHER: Oh there's a big screen is there? Who's that Olivia, tell me about that!

OLIVIA: My (.) that's me

RESEARCHER: That's you, lovely! Who's that Jim?

JIM: Me

RESEARCHER: That's you. And what did you think about service?

JIM: I like sitting with my buddy.

RESEARCHER: You like sitting with your buddy do you yeah? Why?

JIM: Um they help me sit down. And we singin'.

RESEARCHER: You're singing are you? Like when you're singing the wonderful world song? (RESEARCHER sings it)

JIM: Cos we have to sing at the church with our mummies.

RESEARCHER: That's right, you're going to sing up at the church aren't you. And people like your mummies are going to come.

CASSANDRA: My mummy (.) my mummy knows the ways but she sinks [thinks] she's not going to come.

RESEARCHER: Why's that Cassandra?

CASSANDRA: Because she has to look after her sister I got a sister who might be a little bit scared she she won't know who who their names are

RESEARCHER: Oh what in the church?

CASSANDRA: They might know the nursery names

RESEARCHER: Yeah

CASSANDRA: Jim you were in my nursery I know evweeone [everyone] who was in my nusewee [nursery]

RESEARCHER: Do you?

CASSANDRA: Yeah um but I don't know but she might not know the ones not in my nursery. She'll be scared she'll be scared of the ones she won't know not in my nurs- she won't be scared of the ones in my nursery

RESEARCHER: Ok, 'cos she already knows them?

CASSANDRA: Yea. This is all the dots are me

RESEARCHER: It's you is it?

CASSANDRA: Yea Mya's going to be all of the lines.

RESEARCHER: OK. When you've finished your picture of service I want you to turn it over and draw **anything** you like about school. So it could be outside, it could be lunchtime

JIM: It could be dinosaurs

RESEARCHER: Or yes cos you went on the dinosaur trip it could be that.

JIM: Or the toy dinosaurs

RESEARCHER: Yea or the toy dinosaurs or anything- carpet time, phonics. What else could it be, what else do you do in school?

CASSANDRA: We do songs

RESEARCHER: Mmm songs

JIM: PE and we watched Andy's Dinosaur adventures what's my favrwut [favourite]

RESEARCHER: Yeah we did 'cos it was wet play

CASSANDRA: We do Boogie Beat

RESEARCHER: Oh yeah you've done Boogie Beat now. So you can draw anything like that that you want.

JIM: Do you want show you the big T-Rex what made the loud noise?

RESEARCHER: Please. Cos I wasn't on the trip was I?

JIM: No I I will draw the fings [things] and then I need a tuller [colour]

RESEARCHER: You need the colour, OK that's fine. What about you Olivia?

CASSANDRA: I need a blonde I need the yellow I need yellow hair.

RESEARCHER: No problem, there's colours here. What about you Olivia what do you want to draw about school? It's up to you which bit you choose to draw.

OLIVIA: Can I um draw my pups?

RESEARCHER: Are they in school?

OLIVIA: No. They not 'lloed to go in school.

RESEARCHER: Ok are they new are they?

OLIVIA: Yeah one's called Fred and one's called Billy.

((In overlap RESEARCHER: Lovely CASSANDRA: I got a new cat called Sky))

RESEARCHER: Have you really?

CASSANDRA: But there's a dog in Paw Patrol there's a dog called Sky as well and her middle name is called birsday because his birsday's not for a long time that's why he's called birsday.

Appendix 8 – Excerpt of Photo Tour Transcript

Participant: Xavier

Data type: Conversation during photo tour

Location: Big playground, hall, corridor, outside classroom, cloakroom, corridor

Date: 23/10/18

Time: 9.26-9.35am

Event: Tour of the school with Xavier taking photos on ipad

RESEARCHER: Alright, there you go. Do you want the ipad? You hold the ipad? Right do you want to start inside or outside?

ZAVIER: Outside.

RESEARCHER: (whispers) Come on then. Let's go outside.

ZAVIER: I can see your feet!

RESEARCHER: ((Laughs quietly))

ZAVIER: I'm watching your feet so I know where you're goin-. (He watches through the ipad screen.)

RESEARCHER: ((Laughs more)) But make sure you don't bump into anything Xavier.

((Laughs again)) I don't want you to bump into the door! Right, watch it 'cos there's a step.

Look, can you see the step? Right. Where are we taking a photo first? Where are we going?

(He takes a photo) Oooo (intonation down up down). What's this?

ZAVIER: The ((inaudible))

RESEARCHER: The what?

ZAVIER: That.

RESEARCHER: That house?

ZAVIER: No! That thing (.) that drawin- on the floor.



RESEARCHER: Oh that drawing on the floor! (excited tone) So why do you want to take a photo of that? Is it 'cos you love it or 'cos you don't like it or what?

ZAVIER: Uh cos I (.) cos I don't know what we do with it.

RESEARCHER: You don't know what you do with it, right. So you'd like to find out would you?

ZAVIER: Yea. (He checks photo by tapping on the screen)

RESEARCHER: Ok. Is that OK that one?

ZAVIER: Yea.

RESEARCHER: Ok so we've done that one so let's go and find something else. What else can we find a photo of?

ZAVIER: Nothing else outside.

RESEARCHER: Nothing else outside, OK. ((Pause as we walk))

ZAVIER: Go in there. (Points to hall)

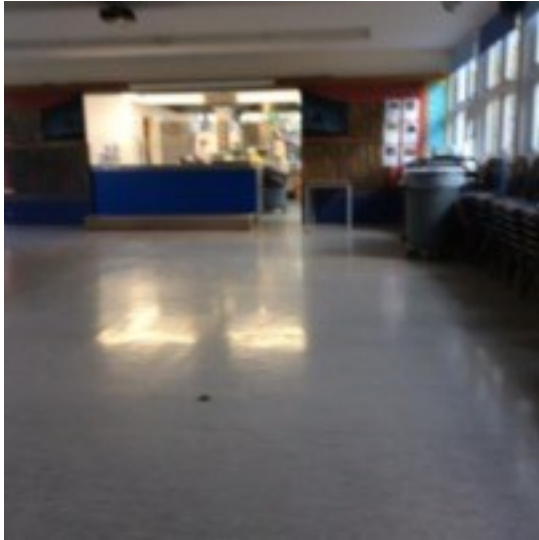
RESEARCHER: Ok, let me see if the hall is (.) [Conversation with caretaker.] Right, the hall's empty. Let's go in there and you can tell me about the hall. Creep to the hall. In here look. (Noise from small groups working outside the classrooms.) Right come and show me. What do you want to show me in here Xavier? (.) What do you come in here for?

ZAVIER: For lunch.

RESEARCHER: For lunch (excited) Do you want to take a picture?

(Zavier nods) Go on then.

(Takes photo.)



RESEARCHER: Super! What else do you do in this room? ((Pause))

(Zavier looks at the photo he has just taken.) Like that one? Is that one Ok? (Zavier nods) Yeah? OK. And what else do you want to take a photo of in this room?

(He points to the candles.) Oh let's look at the candles (.) 'Cos you come into service now don't you?

ZAVIER: Yeah and we blow out candles and (.) put them on.

RESEARCHER: You blow them out **and** put them on do you?

ZAVIER: And we do something with that thing.

(Takes photo.) ((Pause))



RESEARCHER: And what are the candles for?

ZAVIER: For lighting them up.

RESEARCHER: For lighting them up? Right, OK. And where do you sit when it's candle-, when it's service time?

ZAVIER: On here.

RESEARCHER: Oh over here? Yeah? And what's that like?

ZAVIER: I I sit there with my buddy.

RESEARCHER: You sit there with your buddy do you? Who's your buddy again?

ZAVIER: Liam

RESEARCHER: Oh Liam. Lovely.

ZAVIER: But I sitted next to somebody else today.

RESEARCHER: Oh really. Is Liam away?

ZAVIER: Yeah.

RESEARCHER: Oh right Ok. Shall we go and take some more photos? ((Pause as we walk towards the door.))

ZAVIER: I just need to take a photo of these chairs.

RESEARCHER: Oh right why?

ZAVIER: 'Cos I just **need** to!



RESEARCHER: Oh right, do you like those chairs?

ZAVIER: Yes!

RESEARCHER: Do you sit on those?

ZAVIER: No. I just know them 'cos grown ups sit on them.

((In overlap)) RESEARCHER: (quietly) grown ups sit on them. ZAVIER: When it's service.

RESEARCHER: Ok. This way then. Gonna go out that door, let's go this way.

(.) Alright? So you want to do some inside photos now?

ZAVIER: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Ok. Which bit of inside do you wanna to go to?

ZAVIER: It's under that photo.

RESEARCHER: You've done really well with that. You're really good on the ipad (.)

ZAVIER: I know we press that 'cos I (.) 'cos Jane [sister] has a kindle and and we pwess that side.

RESEARCHER: Oh I see. Ok. What do you want to take a photo of inside then?

ZAVIER: That thing there 'cos we don't do anything.

RESEARCHER: Because what sorry?

ZAVIER: We don't do with anything with that fox.

RESEARCHER: You don't do anything with that fox. Ok, right. What else?

(Takes photo.)



RESEARCHER: What's that a picture of? (Shows me screen) Oh that's strange why's it's doing that, hang on (.) Oh I know why, hang on (.) there you are, oh it's still doing it. Why's it doing that? Is that better?

ZAVIER: Mmmmm. (Takes photo.)

RESEARCHER: (Quietly) And why do you like that? What's that a picture of?

ZAVIER: I like that footballer. (Photo of achievement wall with child on winning a football trophy)

RESEARCHER: Oh Philip?

ZAVIER: Yeah.

RESEARCHER: Yeah? OK.

ZAVIER: He looks tiny there.

RESEARCHER: But we can see him can't we.

ZAVIER: Yea. [photo not used as it clearly shows single child in older year group]

Appendix 9 – Transcription notation system for orthographic transcription

Identity of the speaker: The speaker's name followed by colon. Researcher used for when I'm speaking.

Laughing, coughing etc: ((laughs)) ((coughs)). ((General laughter)) on a new line if all laughing.

Pausing: ((Pause)) for significant pause ie a few seconds or more

(.) for a short pause ie a second or less

((Long pause)) for a much longer pause

Overlapping speech: Type ((In overlap)) before start of overlapping speech.

In audible speech: ((inaudible)) for speech and sounds that are completely inaudible.

Non-verbal utterances: as phonetically plausible as possible. Eg Umm Mmmm Erm

In correctly pronounced utterances: as phonetically plausible as possible with [correct word] for clarification if needed

Speech: Kept as phonetically close to the utterance as possible eg w for r

Use of punctuation: Comma as a slight pause but with the continuation of common speech. Full stops where the intonation indicates the end of a sentence. Exclamation marks to indicate excitement or vigour of speech.

Cut off speech and speech sounds: DSean added if word/sound cut off

Emphasis: bold

Reported speech: In quote marks

Identifying information: [generalised word used instead] For example [older sister].

Names of participants and other people mentioned: Name changed

Actions: Where actions described as part of photo tours and draw and talk put in brackets eg (showed me his picture)

Appendix 10 – Example of NVivo complete coding

The screenshot displays the NVivo software interface. On the left, a text document titled 'Observation First lunchtime in ha' is open. The text contains several paragraphs describing a lunchtime scene, with specific phrases highlighted in yellow. On the right, a 'Coding Density' panel shows a list of codes with corresponding colored bars indicating their frequency in the document.

Text Document Content:

Olivia: Is sitting beside Xavier. She picks up her yoghurt and says 'Look, the same!' Xavier smiles back. Olivia picks up her fork and using a scooping motion eats her rice/veg mix. She picks up her meatball and puts it on its side, spears it with a fork then eats it.

Cassandra: Uses her fork to spear the meatball and eat it.

Jim: Looks at the food on his tray. Looks at me. 'I have never, ever tried it before.' Looks back at food for about 3 seconds. 'You know, I'm just going to try it.' I say 'That's a great idea.' An adult comes over and says 'Give it a go Jim.' He looks at the different foods. He picks up the triangle of brown bread and says to himself 'I like bread'. He has a nibble and then quickly takes a sip of water. He looks over at Cassandra's tray and says 'We've got the same- look!' Cassandra nods and smiles.

Albert walks past. An adult says to him 'Did you go to the toilet when you were asked?' Speaks to all the children. 'You **must** go to the toilet **before** you go in the hall. You can't keep leaving!'

Cassandra wriggles in her seat. She says quietly to me 'I think I'm desperate.' I relay this to Ms White who says 'Ok then Cassandra, go quick. I don't want this happening tomorrow.'

Coding Density Panel:

- Liking lunchtime food (Purple bar)
- Positive interaction peers (Green bar)
- Bodies eating lunch (Orange bar)
- Newness of lunchtime food (Purple bar)
- Timing physical needs- toileting (Blue bar)

Appendix 11 – Excerpts of InVivo and Process Coding

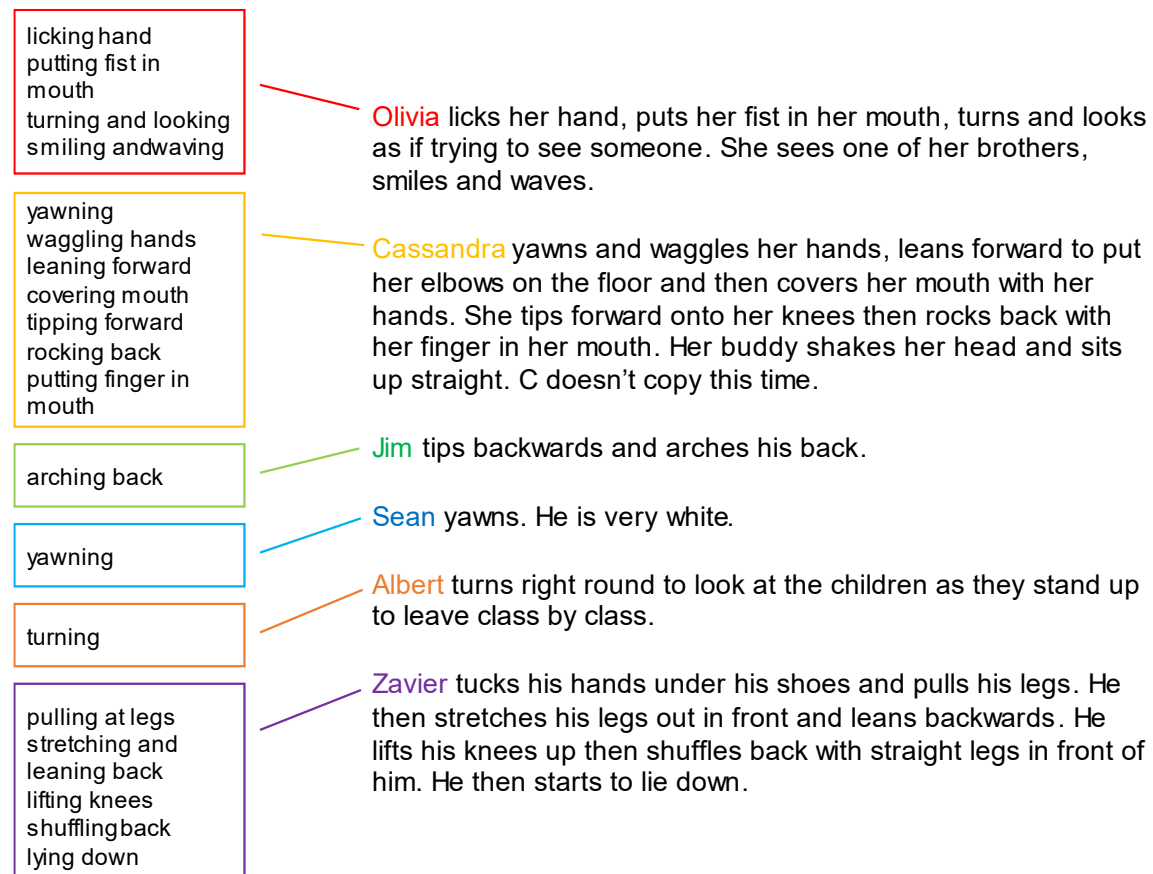
Excerpt showing InVivo Coding

Sean- independent using the toilet, could use the tap with the heel of his hand. Unable to press the soap dispenser with enough force to get the soap to come out. 'It won't work'.

Zavier- looks at the urinal and asks 'What's that thing?' I explain. Used the urinal and came out saying 'I can't flush it'. I explained that it self flushes. He tried to use the taps but can't press down hard enough. He turns to Sean and asks him to help. Sean is covered in soap so they turn to me. I help to press down on the tap.

Cassandra- Walks to the bathroom passing a water fountain. 'Ooh a hand washer!' I explain it is a drinking fountain and show her how to use it. In the bathroom she calls 'I can't do the taps'. I help her to press down. She then tries to get soap out of the dispenser. 'I can't do it!'. I help and she sniffs the handwash. 'It smells yummy!'. She washes her hands and I help with the tap to rinse them off. She walks to the hand-dryer and asks 'Is it noisy?' I say 'A bit' and she tries to use it but it is out of order. She walks back to the classroom to use the towels in there.

Excerpt showing Process Coding



Appendix 12 – Working Towards Candidate Themes

I recorded my initial thoughts on candidate themes

Candidate themes	
Emotions	(Positive emotions) Positive feelings about school Joining in Laughing (Negative emotions) Anxious/unsure Seeking comfort through physical contact Crying
Relationships	(Peers) Positive interaction with peers Friendships Enjoying friendships at playtime Maintaining friendships out of school [could also relate to boundaries] (Older children) Buddy (adults- early years settings and school) Responding to adults Responding to adult suggestions (family) Close family. Parents and siblings Mummy not coming to church Discussing out of school experiences [This could relate to home/school boundary] Separating from parent at start of school session
Boundaries	Places can't go in Fence boundary Lines in playground[could this relate to home/school boundaries, outside/inside, boundaries school and home in terms of clothing and speech.]
Self	It's mine Drawing self

	Initiating activities Co-constructing meaning Awareness of position of self in school
'I don't know what we do with it' Familiarity vs unfamiliarity	(Curric) Homework Finding everything easy Writing names Writing labels for pictures 'Just play' (Enviro- objects and sounds) Commenting on unfamiliar sounds and activities around them I don't know what we do with it' 'Just that boring thing' Knowledge of where things are in nursery (Enviro- routines) New routines at school Missed play due to home routines and time constraints
Responding to/interacting with equipment or objects	Equipment or objects outside (to include Animools) Equipment or objects at lunchtime Equipment or objects in service Equipment or objects in school building
'School is fun'	Activities enjoyed in EYS (too broad, should have narrowed it down- was bucketing rather than storying) Activities enjoyed in school (too broad) Choosing to go inside Choosing outside Building Football Sharing experience of school trip (could be boundary as off school yet in with class)

Nodes I am not yet sure what to do about:

- Prayer, worship and religion (this may be about ritualised language and therefore be incorporated into voice and body?)
- Imagining (role playing)
- Drawing from imagination (mud it's 'tend)
- Imaginative interpretation of materials (Monster den and a little face)
- Photo of cheeky clown on birthday board (not sure how he felt about it as said it was cheeky but also stealing balloons.)

Appendix 13 – Parents’ data

Overview of themes in parents’ data

Theme:	View of school readiness	Experiencing transition emotionally	Meso system
Sub theme:	Ready or not Own role in readying their children	Individual: changing identities Interactive: changing relationships Contextual: changing family routines	Early years settings and home School and home

Key to participants

Parents in purple	Early years educators in light blue		Teaching staff in green
Albert’s Mum (A)	<i>Pre-school</i>	<i>Nursery</i>	<i>School</i>
Cassandra’s Mum (C)	Emma (E)	Tess (T)	Ms Brown (MsB)
Jim’s Mum (J)	Jill (J)	Karen (K)	Ms White (MsW)
Olivia’s Mum (O)			Ms Grey (MsG)
Sean’s Mum (S)			
Zavier’s Mum (Z)			

Theme: View of school readiness

Sub theme:	Ready or not	Own role in readying their children for school
Nodes:	Grown into it C A J	Prior to start:

	Outgrown nursery/pre-school S J Familiarity O S Age A Z C Gender Z Eating lunch- 'fussy' 'unfussy' J S C	Facilitating friendships A Developing self-care: Toileting and clothing C Z Concerns sitting still Z S Pencil grip Z S Academic work C Z Own pace vs 'he's got to do these things' C Z Once fulltime: Tiredness S A C Z Hunger A C Z J
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Theme: Experiencing transition emotionally

Sub theme:	Individual: changing identities	Interactive: changing relationships	Contextual: Family routines changing
Nodes:	Child: growing up O A S Z Parent: last child to go S O changing career S	Loss of pre-school relationships O	Attendance requirements impacting family J C

Theme: Interactions between settings

Sub theme:	Early years settings and home	School and home
Nodes:	Changing relationships T E Proximity E T MsG Communication O C Working with parents at transition T E	Parents' meeting: before start to school Academic preparation A C J Z S MsB Visiting the classroom A Staggered entry: children starting school Adjustments for part time school C A J Building relationships and training children MsG MsW MsB

		<div>Homework</div> <div>Family adaptations for homework Z J S A</div> <div>Proximity at home: homework stewards A O Z</div> <div>Understanding homework requirements C A</div>
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Appendix 14 – Educators’ data

Overview of themes in educators’ data

Theme:	View of school readiness	Experiencing transition emotionally?	Meso system
Sub theme:	Ready or not	Early years educators	Early years settings and school
	Own role in readying the children	Teaching staff	

Key to participants

Early years educators in light blue		Teaching staff in green
<i>Pre-school</i>	<i>Nursery</i>	<i>School</i>
Emma (E)	Tess (T)	Ms Brown (MsB)
Jill (J)	Karen (K)	Ms White (MsW)
		Ms Grey (MsG)

Theme: View of school readiness

Sub theme:	Ready or not	Own role in readying the children for school
Nodes:	<p>Early years educators:</p> <p>Independent self-care: Toileting T E K</p> <p>Follow routines T</p> <p>Follow adult agenda K</p> <p>Sitting still J</p> <p>Age J T E</p> <p>Teaching staff:</p> <p>Independent self-care: Toileting and clothing MsW MsG MsB</p> <p>Follow routines MsW MsG MsB</p>	<p>Early years educators:</p> <p>Independent self-care: Toileting J E T Independent self-care:</p> <p>Clothing K</p> <p>Sitting still E</p> <p>Curriculum knowledge T</p> <p>Teaching staff:</p> <p>Familiarity with environment/ staff/ pedagogy MsB</p> <p>Work with early years settings on curriculum preparation MsB</p>

	Concentrate MsB Curriculum knowledge/ targetsMsB	Following adult agenda MsB Emotional support MsW
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Theme: Experiencing transition emotionally

Sub theme:	Early years educators	Teaching staff
Nodes:	Loss of relationships E K Linked to readiness T K Scared J Head vs heart E	Loss of relationships MsW Anxiety 'starting from scratch' MsW Efficacy of transition arrangements MsB

Theme: Interactions between settings

Sub theme:	Early years settings and school
Nodes:	Transfer documentation T E J K School influencing early years settings E T MsB Communication/feedback between early years settings and school T E J

Appendix 15 – Children’s data

Overview of themes in children’s data

Theme:	Bodies in transition	Boundaries	Emotion (verbal)	Relationships
Sub theme:	Multisensory bodies	Physical	Liking school/activities	Peers
	Bodies encountering objects	Home/school		Older children
	Bodies becoming ‘schooled’			Adults
	Bodies reacting			

Key to participants

Parents in purple	Early years educators in light blue		Teaching staff in green	Children in red
Albert’s Mum (A)	Pre-school	Nursery	School	Albert (A)
Cassandra’s Mum (C)	Emma (E)	Tess (T)	Ms Brown (MsB)	Cassandra (C)
Jim’s Mum (J)	Jill (J)	Karen (K)	Ms White (MsW)	Jim (J)
Olivia’s Mum (O)			Ms Grey (MsG)	Olivia (O)
Sean’s Mum (S)				Sean (S)
Zavier’s Mum (Z)				Zavier (Z)

Theme: Bodies in transition

Sub theme:	Multisensory bodies	Bodies encountering objects	Bodies becoming 'schooled'	Bodies reacting
Nodes:	<p>Touch (whole body)</p> <p>I'm here now</p> <p>C</p> <p>Chapped lips</p> <p>A</p> <p>Feeling cold</p> <p>S C O J</p> <p>Clothing</p> <p>C S A J</p> <p>Floor</p> <p>A O J S C</p> <p>Seeking touch</p> <p>Seeking physical contact</p> <p>O C J</p> <p>Sensory experience of food/eating</p> <p>Liking lunchtime food</p> <p>O S A C Z J</p> <p>Newness of lunchtime food</p>	<p>Objects carry meaning</p> <p>Chairs</p> <p>A O Z J</p> <p>Objects to decipher</p> <p>'What are these things?'</p> <p>Z A C</p> <p>Unknown objects- religious</p> <p>A Z C J O</p> <p>Objects that empower/ disempower</p> <p>Water bottles</p> <p>A, C, J, O, S, Z</p> <p>Bathroom</p> <p>Z C O S</p> <p>Lunchtime</p> <p>Z C J</p> <p>Classroom</p> <p>Z</p>	<p>Sitting and stillness</p> <p>C A Z O J S</p> <p>Bodies eating lunch</p> <p>C Z O J</p> <p>Buddies correcting/modelling body position</p> <p>Z C J</p> <p>Restriction of voice</p> <p>Controlling voice/language</p> <p>A O C Z S J</p> <p>Non-verbal communication</p> <p>Z C O A</p> <p>Moving freely</p> <p>Running O Z A S J</p> <p>Throwing Z</p> <p>Leaping C</p>	<p>Anxious/unsure</p> <p>C J S A O</p> <p>Laughter</p> <p>Z O C S J</p> <p>Fatigue</p> <p>C Z O J S</p>

	<p>J C</p> <p>Smell</p> <p>Responding to smell</p> <p>C O</p> <p>Sound</p> <p>Dislike of noise</p> <p>O J S C</p>		<p>Climbing C</p> <p>Unrestricted voice</p> <p>Roaring A S</p> <p>Calling Z A S J</p> <p>Timing physical needs</p> <p>Toileting A C</p> <p>Hunger O C</p> <p>Homework building muscles J</p>	
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Theme: Bodies in transition

Sub theme:	Multisensory bodies	Bodies encountering objects	Becoming 'schooled' bodies	Bodies reacting
Nodes:	<p>Touch (whole body)</p> <p>I'm here now</p> <p>C</p> <p>Chapped lips</p> <p>A</p> <p>Feeling cold</p> <p>S C O J</p> <p>Clothing</p> <p>C S A J</p> <p>Floor</p> <p>A O J S C</p> <p>Seeking touch</p> <p>Seeking physical contact</p> <p>O C J</p> <p>Sensory experience of food/eating</p> <p>Liking lunchtime food</p> <p>O S A C Z J</p> <p>Newness of lunchtime food</p> <p>J C</p> <p>Smell</p>	<p>Objects carry meaning</p> <p>Chairs</p> <p>A O Z J</p> <p>Objects to decipher</p> <p>'What are these things?'</p> <p>Z A C</p> <p>Unknown objects- religious</p> <p>A Z C J O</p> <p>Objects that disempower</p> <p>Bathroom</p> <p>Z C O S</p> <p>Lunchtime</p> <p>Z C J</p> <p>Classroom</p> <p>Z</p>	<p>Sitting and stillness</p> <p>C A Z O J S</p> <p>Buddies correcting/modelling body position</p> <p>Z C J</p> <p>Restriction of voice</p> <p>Controlling voice/language</p> <p>A O C Z S J</p> <p>Non-verbal communication</p> <p>Z C O A</p> <p>Moving freely</p> <p>Running O Z A S J</p> <p>Throwing Z</p> <p>Leaping C</p> <p>Climbing C</p> <p>Unrestricted voice</p> <p>Roaring A S</p> <p>Calling Z A S J</p> <p>Timing physical needs</p>	<p>Anxious/unsure</p> <p>C J S A O</p> <p>Laughter</p> <p>Z O C S J</p> <p>Fatigue</p> <p>C Z O J S</p>

	Responding to smell C O Sound Dislike of noise O J S C		Toileting A C Hunger O C	
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Theme: Emotions (verbalised)

Sub theme:	Liking school/activities
Nodes:	Stating positive feelings about school S 'I like it'- activities Painting S O Playing with dinosaurs J S C Playing with sand A Playing hot wheels A Singing A Building with foam bricks S C Playing football J A Z S 'I like it'- objects Coat C S Water bottle J Cushion O Books O Wellies C Photo of footballer Z Flowers C Bird boxes S Animal mosaic S C

Theme: Boundaries

Sub theme:	Physical	Home/school
Nodes:	Places can't go in/ go past Fence S Lines in playground S Log circle C Outside/inside A C J O Z School trip off site J C	Maintaining friendships out of school Z S Homework C J Mummy not coming to church C Missed play due to home routines and time constraints A

Theme: Relationships

Sub theme:	Peers	Older children	Adults
Nodes:	<p>Positive interaction with peers Z O C J S A</p> <p>Friendships Z A S</p>	<p>Buddies in Year 4 Z A S C O J</p> <p>Playing football with older children Z J A S</p>	<p>Responding to adults inviting participation (in educational settings) Choosing to join in A C J S Not to O Z</p> <p>Initiating interaction with researcher 'Can I tell you something?' J C S A</p> <p>Talking about close family J S O A</p> <p>Separating from parent at start of school session: Confident S Z C J Unsure A O</p>

Appendix 16 – Frequency of coding for theme Multisensory bodies

Sub theme	Node	Sources	References
Touch (whole body) (19)	I'm here now	1	1
	Chapped lips	1	1
	Feeling cold	3	4
	Clothing	5	8
	Floor	4	5
Seeking touch (4)	Seeking physical contact	4	4
Sensory experience eating food (12)	Liking lunchtime food	3	5
	Newness of lunchtime food	4	7
Smell (3)	Responding to smell	3	3
Sound (5)	Dislike of noise	4	5

Appendix 17 – Types of photographs from photo tours

Name of child	Object	Space	Person
Cassandra	33	1	3
Sean	33	2	0
Jim	16	5	0
Albert	7	4	0
Zavier	7	2	1
Olivia	7	1	0
	Total=103	Total=15	Total=4

Appendix 18 – Importance of buddies in service



ZAVIER: I'm just gunna draw me and Liam on the carpet

Jim also draws himself sitting by his buddy in the hall:

JIM: I like sitting with my buddy.

RESEARCHER: You like sitting with your buddy do you yeah? Why?

JIM: Um they help me sit down. And we singin'.



Cassandra's drawing of her buddy started with dots representing the seats in the outline of a circular shape which did in fact mirror the positioning of the seats stacked against the walls of the hall. Later she decided to turn the dots into the outline of herself, then changed it again to represent her buddy.

